

Armenia in the 4th-1st Centuries B.C.

by Nicholas Adontz

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[Bibliography](#)

[Footnotes](#) by V. A. Boghosyan

[Page 431]

1. The East [and Armenia] in the Period of the Macedonian Empire

The Macedonian army landed in Asia Minor in the spring of 334 B.C. Prepared to stop this invasion, the troops of the Persian King of Kings were lined up on the banks of the Granicus River, which flows through Mysia and debouches into the Propontis [Sea of Marmara]. "The Hellespont will be dishonored if we do not dare to cross the Granicus," Alexander said, and then attacked the Persian army. He won this first and important victory. The territory of the great satrapy of Dascylium thereby passed to Alexander. Mithrenes, the fortress-keeper of Sardis, handed over Sardis to Alexander without resistance. [Mithrenes] had no other organized forces capable of defending the [Persian] king's domains in Asia Minor. Next, the victorious Alexander moved on to Cilicia. In 333 B.C. a second major battle took place at Issus. Darius [III Kodomanos], who personally led [the Persian army], panicked and fled. [Ancient historians] assert that the Persian army numbered as many as three hundred thousand infantry and cavalry. It included, among other peoples, Armenian troops (forty thousand infantry, seven thousand cavalry).

With the victory at Issus, the gates of Syria were opened before the conquerors and with it the road to Egypt. Alexander proceeded cautiously, in heading for Syria and Egypt first. After the conquest of these countries, he would gain a reliable foothold, and thereafter could confidently penetrate eastward into the center of the Persian Empire. Most decisive for Darius was the third battle, which took place [in October, 331], in the valley of Arbela, at Gaugamela, not far from the former capital of Nineveh. Fortune already had turned away from the great king: he was thoroughly defeated and fled to the states in the East. The Persian army [supposedly] numbered forty thousand cavalry [432] and a hundred myriads (or one million) infantry—a figure which is not credible (1). According to another source, the number of cavalry was forty-five thousand, and the number of infantry was two hundred thousand, which probably is closer to reality. All the satrapies, from Cappadocia to distant Bactriane sent their troops, under the command of their corresponding satraps. Armenia was represented by its two satraps, Orontes [Ervand] and Mitraustes [Mihrvahisht]. Atropates was the commander of the Mar people [the Mars]. The Cadusii, the Aghuans and the Sacasenes were lined up next to the Mars. The Cappadocians were commanded by Ariaces, and a part of Syria (still under the rule of the king) was led by Mazeos (2).

(1) Q. Curtii Rufi, *De rebus gestis Alexandri Magni libri superstites*, [liber III, cap. 2](#) [at Perseus]. *Armenii quadraginta millia miserant peditum, additis septem millibus equitum* [The Armenians sent 40,000 infantry, to which was added 7,000 cavalry]. Quintus Curtius Rufus, *History of Alexander the Great*, [Book 3, chapter 2](#) [in English, at Internet Archive]. Figures for the Persian forces, even though traditionally greatly exaggerated, are given with their details in the list below:

Persians, 100,000, of which 30,000 were cavalry.

Medes, 50,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry.

Barcanians, 10,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry.

Armenians, 40,000 infantry, 7,000 cavalry.

Hyrcanians, 6,000 cavalry.

Derbices, 40,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry.

Casps, 8,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry.

Caspian tribes, 2,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry.

Greeks, 30,000, see *ibid.* pp. 108-109.

(2) *Arriani Anabasis/Arrian's Anabasis*, [Book III.8. 5] [at Internet Archive, bilingual]. Ἀρμενίων δὲ Ὀρόντης καὶ Μιθραύστης ἦρχε ["The Armenians were under Orontes and Mithraustes"].

The other participants were [III. 8. 2-6]:

1. Bactrians and Sogdians, and neighboring Indian tribes under the command of the Bactrian satrap Bessus.
2. Sacae, Scythians of Asia, commanded by Mauaces.
3. Arachosians, together with neighboring Indian tribes, under Barsaentes.
4. Areans, under the command of their satrap Satibarzanes.
5. Parthaeans, Hyrcanians and Topeirians, under the command of Phrataphernes.
6. Tribes bordering on the Red Sea were directed by Orontobates, Ariobarzanes and Orxines.
7. The Uxians and Susianians had Oxathres son of Abulites as commander. [continued]

[433]

Another source [(1)] informs us that on the left side of the Persian army divided into two parts, among others, there were Armenians who were called "Lessers" and on the right, Armenians from Greater Armenia [(2)]. It should be noted that the division of the Armenian lands into Lesser and Greater must have occurred prior to the 4th century B.C., as the historian would have used [such geographical] expressions that were current in his day.

After the victory of Gaugamela, Alexander hastened to Babylon, the capital of the empire, and seized the throne of the King of Kings. Unimpeded, the victor headed straight for Susa [Shosh], then on to Persepolis and Pasargadae. Then he moved on to Ecbatana in order to seize the treasury there and at the same time to pursue Darius. From Ecbatana, Alexander headed to Raga, near [modern] Tehran, where he received word that Darius had been treacherously killed by one of the satraps. From that moment on, the conquest of the Persian Empire was over [according to the ancient historians].

For two years Alexander worked to overcome the resistance of the rebellious satraps of the eastern states and to subdue them. In 326 B.C. he invaded India, [a campaign] which lasted almost a year. After descending along the banks of the Indus River,

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8. Babylonians, under the command of Bupares.
 9. Armenians.
 10. Cappadocians.

11. Medes.

12. Syrians.

Altogether, [the above represented forces from] 12 satrapies.

Q. Curtii Rufi, *op. cit.*, [liber IV, cap. 12](#). [at Perseus].

Quintus Curtius Rufus, *op. cit.*, [Book 4, chapter 12](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

Quintus Curtius portrays the army as divided into a left and right wing. In the left wing were the Bactrians, Dahae, Arachosians and Susians, Massagetae, Persians, Mardians, and Sogdians, commanded by Ariobarzanes and Orontobates, with their supreme commander being Orsines. The Caspii, were under Phradates, and after them came Indians and residents of the Red Sea area, **Armenii, quos minores vocant** [the Armenians called the lesser Armenians (Armenians from Lesser Armenia/Armenia Minor)]. Following them came Babylonians, Belitae, and inhabitants of the Cossaeon Mountains, Gortuae, who were assisted by Phrygians and Cataonians, and finally, the Parthians and Scythians.

In the right wing of the army were, first and foremost the Armenians **natio majoris Armeniae** [residents of Greater Armenia], followed by Cappadocians, [and Cadusians], and Syrians, followed by Medes. This entire mass constituted 45,000 cavalry and 200,000 infantry.

This historian's information corresponds only in a general way with the information found in Arrian.

[434] He made his way back to Pasargadae through the deserts of Gedrosia, and then to Babylon in 323. Now came the time to be occupied with the organization of the conquered countries. In the same year 323 [in autumn], Alexander's death terminated his plans. It is not clear on what grounds he was going to establish his government, and how he was preparing to regulate the state administration.

Alexander's courage was one of his awesome [advantages]. It probably was based entirely on his phenomenal successes. It seems that his campaign was due more to this madness, which is called *felix temeritas* [happy recklessness], than to deliberate action as a result of a considered plan. Good fortune made him want to push on to the farthest places in the then known world. He conquered a vast territory without having a means of holding it together. It was Alexander's [early] death which preserved his glory, for if he had lived longer, he might have witnessed the collapse of his enterprise. His dizzying success made him lose his head and his heart, too. "Beginning with the spirit of Trajan, he ended with the heart of Nero, and the manners of Elagabalus" (1). Therefore, if he had not died when he did, Alexander would have been characterized in history not as a hero, but as an ingenious adventurer [(3)].

In reality, Alexander did not conquer the Persian Empire, but only enough of it to clear the way to the capital of the King of Kings, leaving his comrades-in-arms to finish the conquest. This task was difficult enough to complete. It is impossible to say when it was fulfilled—during his lifetime or after—and, similarly, it is impossible to speak of the Persian Empire as ever being under the complete subjugation of the Macedonians.

After the battle of Granicus, two satrapies, Hellespontine Phrygia and Lydia, came under the rule of the conqueror. However, the neighboring satrapies of Greater Phrygia and Cappadocia to the Halys River, and Cappadocia on the other side of Halys, were not conquered. Alexander assigned to Antigonos

(1) Napoleon mentions this in his *Memoires*.

[435] the work of conquering Phrygia and [the area called] Sabictas Cappadocia (1). Cappadocia on the other side of Halys was under the rule of Ariarathes. The littoral states of Bithynia and Paphlagonia also retained their independence.

Armenia was in the same situation. Sources claim that after the Battle of Gaugamela, after his arrival in Babylon, Alexander sent to Armenia Mithrenes—the commander who earlier had surrendered Sardis (2). However, there is no evidence that Mithrenes completed his mission. We know that another individual, Menon, was sent to Armenia to look for gold in the mines of the Sispyritis [Sper] region. But the locals attacked him and drove him away (3). Mithrenes could have met the same fate. Indeed, in the lists of Macedonian conquests, we do not find any mention of Armenia.

Alexander died. This was followed by an extended struggle over the first division of the empire, between the high-ranking army commanders and the late conqueror's court. The division of satrapies (together with their rulers) is as follows:

1. Egypt was given to Ptolemy, son of Lagus.
2. Syria to Laomedon.
3. Cilicia to Philotas.
4. Media, to Pithon.
5. Cappadocia and Paphlagonia, along with the coastal areas where Alexander had not gone, to Eumenes.
6. Pamphilia, Lycia and Greater Phrygia to Antigonos.
7. Caria, to Cassandrus.
8. Lydia, to Menandrus [Meleagrus].
9. Hellespontian Phrygia, to Leonnatus.
10. Thrace, to Lysimachus.

(1) Arriani Anabasis, [liber I, cap. 17](#); [liber II, cap. 4](#) [at Internet Archive, bilingual].

(2) *ibid.* [liber III, cap. 16](#). κατέπεμψε δὲ καὶ ἐς Ἀρμενίαν Μιθρήνην σατράπην [Mithrines was sent to Armenia as a satrap].

(3) Strabonis Geographica, [liber XI, cap. 14](#) [at Perseus].

Strabo's *Geography*, [Book 11, chapter 14](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[436]

11. Macedonia, to Antipater.
12. Paropamisages, to Oxyartes.
13. Aracosia and Gedrosia, to Sibyartius.
14. Arian and Drangiana, to Stasandrus.
15. Bactriane and Sogdia, to Philip.
16. Parthia and Vrkan [Hyrcania], to Pratapernes.
17. Parsk' [Persia], to Pecestasi.
18. Garmania, to Tlepolemus.
19. Media, to Atropates.
20. Babylon, to Arkon.
21. Mijagetk' [Mesopotamia], to Archesilaus.
22. [Illegible] (1)

It would be in vain to search for the names of Armenia or Mithrenes in this list. There is no longer any mention of the supposed satrap. It is very likely that he died in Armenia.

"Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, the whole coast of Pontus to Trabzon" were given to Alexander's first secretary, Eumenes. However, these lands had not yet been conquered; their king was Ariarathes I. According to another source, Eumenes was designated as supervisor of the entire region up to Trabzon and ordered to wage war against Arbates, who was the only ruler who did not want to submit to Macedonian rule (2). Two neighboring satraps, Leonnatus, the satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia and Antigonos, the satrap of the Greater Phrygia, received from Perdikkas

(1) Diodori Bibliotheca Historica, [liber XVIII, cap. 3](#), at Perseus;

Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, [Book 18, chapter 3](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius]. This list belongs to Hieronymus of Cardia. The same list is presented by Pompeius Trogus with a few deviations. (Justini historiarum philippicarum ex Trogo Pompeio liber XIII, cap. 4);

[Justin, Book 13, chapter 4](#) [at Internet Archive, in English]. Thus he awards Bactria and Sogdiana not to Phillipus, but to two other individuals, Amyndas and Skutas. The same applies to Parthia and Hyrcania, each of which, instead of Pradapernes, had a separate ruler, Nicanor and Phillipus. He adds Armenia, which was given to Telepolimus. The latter was satrap of Carmania, which is here confused with Armenia.

(2) Q. Curtii Rufi, *op. cit.*, [liber X, cap. 10](#): bellum cum Arbate [Ariarathe] gereret. Solus hic detrectabat imperium [War was waged against Arbates. He was the only one who did not accept (Macedonian) suzerainty]. It appears that Arbates may be a corrupted form of Ariarathes.

Quintus Curtius Rufus, *op. cit.*, [Book 10, chapter 10](#) [in English, at Internet Archive]. Compare, Plutarchus, Arbat, Artax [(4)].

[437] an order to assist Eumenes in establishing himself in his domain. Antigonus did not want to submit, and Leonnatus, who was called to Thessaly, died there.

Perdiccas was forced to go in person against Ariarathes, against whom he fought and, in 322, crucified along with his entire family. Thus Eumenes had secured his satrapy.

Not wanting to separate from Perdiccas, Eumenes entrusted the cities to his relatives, appointed garrison chiefs, elected judges and suppliers, and escorted Perdiccas to Cilicia. Here Perdiccas decided that it would be more profitable to send him back "outwardly to rule his satrapy, but, in fact to rule over bordering Armenia, where Neoptolemus had provoked riots (1)."

It is not clear what the status was of this person who provoked the riots in Armenia. The matter concerns [the territory of] Lesser Armenia, which bordered on Cappadocia, but it is also not known whether Lesser Armenia was included in the satrapy of Cappadocia. It seems that Neoptolemus, militarily, was one of the satrap's subjects.

At the same time, Craterus and Antipater had left Greece for Asia Minor to fight against Perdiccas. The latter, who was preparing to go to Egypt to war against Ptolemy, "appointed Eumenes supreme commander of the forces of Armenia and Cappadocia" (2) and ordered his brother Alcetas and Neoptolemus to obey Eumenes. Lesser Armenia is always included; however, there is no information about its relations with the satrap of Cappadocia.

Neoptolemus betrayed Eumenes, and switched allegiance to Craterus and Antipater. He led Craterus against Eumenes, while Antigonus headed for Cilicia to attack Perdiccas from the rear. Eumenes fought with Craterus and Neoptolemus, and killed them in battle. But

(1) [Plutarchi Eumenes, 4.](#), at Perseus: λόγῳ μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σατραπείαν, ἔργῳ δὲ τὴν ὁμορον Ἀρμενίαν τετραρχήμενην ὑπὸ Νεοπτολέμου διὰ χειρὸς ἔξοντα. [Plutarch's Eumenes, 4.](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) [Plutarchi, op cit., 5.1.](#), at Perseus: Εὐμενῇ τῶν ἐν Ἀρμενίᾳ, καὶ Καππαδοκίᾳ δυνάμεων αὐτοκράτορα στρατηγόν: [Plutarch, op cit., 5](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[438] the death of his ally Perdiccas nullified the significance of that victory.

Freed from such a formidable adversary, Antipater and Antigonus undertook the redistribution of satrapies, an event which occurred in Triparadeisus in 321, with the following arrangement:

1. Egypt - Ptolemy
2. Syria - Laomedon
3. Cilicia - Philoxenus
4. Mesopotamia and Arbelitis - Amphilochus
5. Babylon - Seleucus
6. Susiane - Antigenes
7. Persia - Peucestes
8. Carmania - Tlepolemus
9. Media - Pithon
10. Parthia - Philippos
11. Aria and Drangiana - Stasander
12. Bactriane and Sogdiane - Stasanor
13. Aracosia
14. Paropanisadae

15. Northern India
16. Patalay India
17. Hytaspes India, all retained their former satraps
18. Cappadocia - Nicanor
19. Greater Phrygia, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Lycia - Antigonos
20. Caria - Cassandrus
21. Lydia - Cleitus
22. Hellespontian Phrygia - Arrhidaeus (1).

It is evident that Armenia is absent from this list. The sole reason for this is that Armenia was not under Macedonian rule.

(1) Diodori, [liber XVIII, cap. 39](#), at Perseus;
Diodorus [Book 18, chapter 39](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius];

Arriani Historiae successorum Alexandri fragmenta, 34. The numbers that are highlighted in the above list relate to the previous satraps.

[439]

Antipater gave his consent to these arrangements more as a trustee. He was to die two years later. At that point, a fierce battle broke out between Antigonos and Eumenes. The latter was defeated and took refuge in Nora, a fortress in a region bordering on Cappadocia and Lycaonia (1).

We know that "Eumenes intended to flee to Armenia in order to assemble some allies from the inhabitants there" (2). However, Antigonos prevented him, and at that time he went to Nora [fortress].

Eumenes sought help in Persia to fight against his adversaries with the armed forces of the local satrap Peucestes. The latter was competing with Pithon, the satrap of Media, for supremacy in Persia. The Babylonian satrap Seleuceus sided with Pithon. Shortly afterwards, Antigonos appeared and attacked Eumenes from Babylon. In Tadarnaga (near Isfahan) Eumenes lost the battle and was killed by Antigonos in 317 (3).

At that time, the satrapy of Armenia was in the hands of Orontes. Eumenes is said to have invented a "letter written in Assyrian" in which it was said that the child heir Alexander and [Alexander the Great's mother] Olympias had spoken out in favor of aiding Eumenes and opposing Antigonos. Eumenes presented this false letter as "received from Orontes of Armenia, a friend of satrap Peucestes" (4).

We are not sure whether Eumenes sought the help of Orontes in [Greater] Armenia as mentioned above, or whether the text refers instead to Lesser Armenia.

After the slaying of Eumenes and during the period 317-301, Antigonos became the primary director of the state. He was succeeded by his son, Demetrius Poliorcetes, who dreamed of

(1) Plutarchi [Eumenes, 10](#), at Perseus.
Plutarch's [Eumenes, 10](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) Diodori, [liber XVIII, cap. 41](#), at Perseus. ὁ μὲν Εὐμενὴς ἐπεβάλετο φεύγειν εἰς Ἀρμενίαν καὶ τῶν ἐν ταύτῃ κατοικούντων τινὰς πρὸς τὴν συμμαχίαν συλλαβέσθαι.
Diodorus, [Book 18, chapter 41](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(3) Diodori, [liber XIX, cap. 14](#), at Perseus.
Diodorus, [Book 19, chapter 14](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(4) Diodori, [liber XIX, cap. 23](#), at Perseus. ἡ δ' ἐπιστολὴ Συρίοις γεγραμμένη γράμμασιν ἀπέσταλτο παρὰ Ὀρόντου τοῦ σατραπείαν μὲν ἔχοντος Ἀρμενίας, φίλου δὲ ὄντος Πευκέστῃ
Diodorus, [Book 19, chapter 23](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius];

Plutarchi [Eumenes, 13](#), at Perseus;
Plutarch's [Eumenes, 13](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

From this letter it is clear that Plutarch considered it trustworthy and does not mention an Armenian satrap named Orontes.

[440] restoring the unity of the empire. Aware of the impending threat, Seleucus retreated, going to Ptolemy who was similarly terrified of Antigonos' lust for power. They established relations with the rulers of Macedonia and Thrace and made a joint proposal to Antigonos, about ceding Babylon to Seleucus, Cappadocia to Cassandrus, and Syria to Ptolemy. Antigonos preferred to settle the issue militarily, and declared war on them. Two [of the battles] are noteworthy. [The first] is the battle of Gaza in Syria, as a result of which Seleucus captured Babylon in 312.

In 306, Antigonos and Demetrius won a great battle at sea, and adopted the royal title on that occasion. The other successors [of Alexander] did not hesitate to do the same, and from that moment on the division of the empire into independent units became a fact. At Ipsus in Cappadocia, Antigonos and his opponents fought a major battle that had catastrophic consequences for Antigonos. Defeated, he died in 301, by suicide. Asia Minor passed to Lysimachus, the ruler of Thrace, and Syria passed to Seleucus.

Antigonos' son Demetrius continued to battle for Asia Minor for the next twenty years. First, Seleucus supported Lysimachus in the struggle against Demetrius, who finally suffered a defeat in 285. He died as Seleucus' captive. Next, at the battle of Corupedion in 281, he settled issues with Lysimachus. Seleucus [I Nicator] was triumphant and became the only ruler of Asia. Thus was the Seleucid empire established. It included lands extending from Phrygia to India: "Mesopotamia, Armenia, Seleucid Cappadocia, Persia" (1), Parthia, etc. However, the historian has erred in including Armenia among the Seleucid countries.

(1) [Appiani, De rebus Syriacis, 55](#) [at Internet Archive, bilingual], ἤρξε Μεσοποταμίας καὶ Ἀρμενίας καὶ Καππαδοκίας τῆς Σελευκίδος λεγομένης καὶ Περσῶν, etc. In another place the same historian follows Hieronymus according to whom Alexander did not enter Cappadocia, but instead, he "went against Darius via another route which led over the coasts of Pamphylia and Cilicia." ([Mithridatica, 8](#)) [at Internet Archive, bilingual] ἀνὰ τὴν παράλιον τῆς Παμφυλίας καὶ Κιλικίας ἑτέραν ὁδὸν ἐπὶ τὸν Δαρεῖον τραπέοθαι.

[441]

Ariarathes II, son of King Ariarathes (who had been crucified by Perdiccas in 322) took refuge in Armenia. Shortly afterwards, when Eumenes and Perdiccas were already dead and Antigonos was fighting against Seleucus, Ariarathes, using the auxiliary forces of the Armenian king *Ardoates*, killed the Macedonian general and restored his own rights to his patrimonial principality (1). The enmity between Antigonos and Seleucus began after the battle in Gaza in 312 and ended in 301 with the defeat of Antigonos and his suicide. Thus, in 312-301, a king named Ardoates ruled in Armenia. This name is a distortion of the well-known Arouandes or Aruandes, otherwise known as Orontes/Ervand, the same satrap who led the Armenian armed forces at the Battle of Arbela in 331 and the same satrap Orontes who is mentioned in connection with the story of the false letter of Eumenes (who died in 317).

It was either this Orontes, or probably his son, who must have taken the royal title in 306, when Antigonos declared himself king and others followed his example. Armenia was initially able to avoid Macedonian rule, and when the appropriate time came, following the example of Antigonos and the other successors [of Alexander], [Armenia's ruler] put on the royal crown.

(1) Diodori [liber XXXI, cap. 19](#) (according to [the surviving fragment] furnished by Patriarch Photius [Greek text, at remacle.org]: Ἀριαράθης δὲ ὁ τοῦ προβεβασιλευκότος υἱὸς ἀπελπίσας κατὰ τὸ παρὸν ἀποχωρεῖ μετ' ὀλίγων πρὸς τὴν Ἀρμενίαν. Μετ' οὐ πολὺν δὲ χρόνον τῶν περὶ τὸν εὐμένη καὶ Περδίκκαν τελευτησάντων, Ἀντιγόνου δὲ καὶ Σελεύκου περισπωμένων, λαβὼν δύναμιν παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως τῶν Ἀρμενίων Ἀρδοάτου, τὸν μὲν τῶν Μακεδόνων στρατηγὸν Ἀμύνταν ἀπέκτεινεν, ἐξέβαλε δὲ καὶ Μακεδόνας ταχέως τῆς χώρας, καὶ τὴν οἰκίαν ἀρχὴν ἀνεκτίσατο;

Diodorus [Book 31, chapter 19](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius]. "Ariarathes (II), the son of the late king, regarding the situation as hopeless for the present, retired with a few followers to Armenia. Not long after, Eumenes and Perdiccas having died, and Antigonos and Seleucus being elsewhere engaged, he obtained an army from Ardoates, king of Armenia, slew

Amyntas, the Macedonian general, expelled the Macedonians from the land in short order, and recovered his original domain."

It has long been assumed that the name Ardoates should be taken to be Aroandes (J. G. Droysen, *Geschichte d. Hellenismus*, II, 2, 225). After the inscription from Mt. Nemrut clarified the identity of Aroandes and Orontes, there is no doubt about it [(5)].

[442]

In general, the countries along the northern borders of the Seleucid empire, Bithynia, Pontus, Cappadocia, Armenia, Parthia, and even the peoples of India were able to avoid the domination of [Alexander's] heirs, and they designated their own rulers with the title of king.

King Aroandes (Ardoates) had a successor whose name has not been preserved [(6)]. King Nicodemus [I] (275-250) of Bithynia had a son named Ziaelas from his first wife. His second wife, as a stepmother, persecuted Ziaelas to such an extent that the unfortunate royal was forced to escape, taking refuge with the Armenian king. The stepmother was trying to destroy Ziaelas in order to secure the throne for her sons. Ziaelas' escape took place during his father's lifetime, so this happened before 250, probably around 265. In that year there was a king in Armenia who granted Ziaelas asylum. He probably was Aroandes' son, or, in any case, his successor.

During the reign of Seleucus II (246-226) there was already another Armenian king named Arsames [Arsham]. Antiochus Hierax, the brother of the Seleucid king rebelled against his brother and fled to Mesopotamia. When he crossed the border into Armenia, he was received by Arsames, who was his friend (2). The refugee prince died in the year 227. Arsames—who was occupying the Armenian throne at that time—probably descends from the king mentioned above, the friend and contemporary of Ziaelas. That these two kings really belong to the dynasty of Orontes and Aroandes, we have as evidence the inscription of the king of Commagene, which was mentioned above.

(1) Memnonis, *Historiarum Heracleae Ponti*, fr. 22; (C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, Paris, 1883, [t. III, p. 537](#) [Greek with Latin translation, at Internet Archive]. XXI. Οὐ πολλοῦ δὲ πάνυ ῥυέντος χρόνου, ὁ τῶν Βιθυνῶν βασιλεὺς Νικομήδης, ἐπεὶ ὁ μὲν ἐκ προτέρων αὐτῷ γάμων γεγινὼς παῖς Ζηῖλας φυγὰς ἦν πρὸς τὸν Ἀρμενίων βασιλέα, ταῖς τῆς μητριᾶς Ἑταζέτας μηχαναῖς ἐλαθεῖς [Not long after, Ziaelas, the son of Nicomedes, king of Bithynia by an earlier marriage, fled to the king of the Armenians, to escape from the schemes of his step-mother]

[[Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum](#) volumes, at Internet Archive

The same passage [from DFHG volume 3](#) [The retrieval is slow, since the passage is near the bottom, and the file is very large. The first screen you will see is the first page of volume 3. If you wait about a minute, the exact page for the passage (p. 537) is brought to the top]: Οὐ πολλοῦ δὲ πάνυ ῥυέντος χρόνου, ὁ τῶν Βιθυνῶν βασιλεὺς Νικομήδης, ἐπεὶ ὁ μὲν ἐκ προτέρων αὐτῷ γάμων γεγινὼς παῖς Ζηῖλας φυγὰς ἦν πρὸς τὸν Ἀρμενίων βασιλέα, ταῖς τῆς μητριᾶς Ἑταζέτας μηχαναῖς ἐλαθεῖς...

[DFHG](#) Digital Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum, Main Index for the volumes, at [dfhg-progject.org](#)

(2) Polyaei Rhetori IV, 17. Ἀντίοχος Σελεύκου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἀποστὰς ἔφυγεν εἰς τὴν Μέσσην τῶν ποταμῶν, ὅθεν καὶ τοὺς μὲν Ἀρμενίων ὄρους διελθόντα φίλος ὢν Ἀρσάμης [Antiochus, having revolted from his brother Seleucus, made his escape into Mesopotamia; and in his march over the Armenian mountains he was joined by Arsames] [Polyaenus, IV. 17](#), at Attalus. "Arsabes" is a typo. It should be "Arsames."

[[Index to Polyaenus](#) (Greek and English) at Attalus]

[443]

King Antiochus of Commagene considered himself a descendant of Aroandes [Ervand]. His genealogy includes:

King Arsames, who is the son of King Samos and
King Mithridates, the son of King Samos (1)

This Arsames is our [Arsham]-Arsames, the friend of the Seleucid refugee prince. Antiochus Hierax fled to Arsames around 230.

Antiochus was the brother of Seleucus II Callinicos. The latter killed his stepmother, Berenice, the sister of King Ptolemy [III Evergetes I] of Egypt [246-221]. This crime turned Ptolemy against him. The defeated Seleucus fled to Antiochus to seek help from his brother. As compensation, he offered him all of Asia, up to the Taurus mountains.

Greedy for power and for other people's property, Antiochus, like a bird of prey, wanted to take everything from his brother. It was this tendency that gave rise to his nickname "Hierax" meaning "hawk."

In 241 King Ptolemy made peace with Seleucus for ten years. Then war broke out between the brothers. Hierax suffered three major defeats, lost his entire kingdom, and fled to Mesopotamia. He then took refuge with King Ariarathes of Cappadocia (280-230), who initially received him well, but shortly after, Antiochus noticed that plots were being hatched against him, and he fled. It was about this time that he took refuge with Arsames. However, the generals of Seleucus chased him away from Arsames, and Hierax fled to Egypt. King Ptolemy stopped him and Antiochus fled to Thrace, where he was killed in 227 (2).

Antiochus Hierax had married the sister of King Ziaelas of Bithynia, who seized the throne of his brother Zipoetes (250-229). We

(1) K. Humann und O. Puchstein, *Reisen in Kleinasien und Nord-Syrien*, p. 285,

- a) βασιλέα <'A>ρσά<μην> τὸν ἐκ β<ασιλέως> Σάμου,
- b) βασιλέα Μιθράτην Καλλίνικον τ<ὸν ἐκ βασιλέ>ω[ς] Σάμο<υ>.

(2) Polyaei IV, 17; Justini, liber XIII, cap. 27.

[444] saw that in the year 260 Ziaelas sought refuge with another king of Armenia, whose name is not mentioned, but who seems to be the father of Arsames. His father was Samos, who may have been the anonymous king, the friend of Ziaelas, and a descendant of Aroandes, according to the sense of the genealogy in question.

As for Mithridates' father Samos, he could also be identified with the same Samos, and in this case Mithridates and Arsames probably were two brothers, or else we must assume that Arsames had another son who bore his father's name, Samos.

According to the [damaged] inscription, Aroandes had one son, whose name ended in "danés". Therefore, Samos could not be the son of Aroandes, but the son of this "X-danés." Thus, we have Aroandes (331-330), "X-danés" (280), Samos (260), Arsames (230). Undoubtedly, this Arsames is the founder of the Armenian city of Arsamosata [Arshamashat] in the Kharberd region, on the Euphrates.

The name of this place where the inscriptions were found, as the inscription itself confirms, was *Arsamea*, that is, the city founded by Arsames. Samosat, the [capital] city of Commagene, is named after a certain Samos. Nothing certain can be said about the possible equation of these people named Samos and Arsames. It is also not possible to determine the date of the relocation of a branch of the Orontids to Commagene. It is only certain that the transfer was from Armenia. In addition to the medieval city of Arsamosata, there was known in Armenia a region called Arshamunik', which means the domain of Arsham, Arsames. This region is located on the other side of the Arsanias River, within the borders of Taron and Taronitis.

These two names clearly indicate the existence of a prince [king] Arsames in Armenia. Similarly, the memory of the Orontids has been preserved in the name of another area, Ervandunik', that is, the domain of the Ervandunis. Incidentally, the city of Zarehawan is named after Zariadres, which can not be attributed to the king of Tsopk'. If this name stems from [445] the name of an unknown prince, the same could be the case with Ervandunik'.

The Aroandes family could thus have turned into a national dynasty, which ruled Armenia at least from the late fourth century to the beginning of the second century B.C. (190 B.C.). It is necessary to consider whether the [Orontid] dynasty [(7)] was extinguished in this year in order to cede the stage to Artaxias [Artashes] and Zariadres [Zareh].

[2. Artaxias I and the unification of Armenian lands]

It is said that the two commanders of Antiochus [III] the Great (223-187), Artaxias and Zariadres, divided Armenia between themselves, each governing a part of the country with the consent of Antiochus. In 190 B.C., after the defeat of the Seleucids at the Battle of Magnesia, [Artaxias and Zariadres] sided with the Romans, proclaiming themselves completely independent, and becoming kings, each in his own part.

This hypothesis concerning Artaxias and Zariadres was suggested to us by Strabo, after mentioning that Armenia was subjugated first to the Persians, then to the Macedonians, and that the last satrap there was Orontes, one of the descendants of Hydarnes [(8)].

Contemporaries gladly adopted the story of the world-famous geographer, and they accepted that the last satrap, Orontes, was the immediate heir of Artaxias and Zariadres. Thus, the satrapic administration was thought to have survived during the Seleucid rule until the Battle of Magnesia, which was followed by the secession of Armenia from the Seleucid Empire.

As for the last satrap, however, we must recall Orontes, who was the commander of the Armenian armed forces at the Battle of Arbela. He or his son later accepted the royal title. His successors bore the same title until the time of Antiochus the Great. If, by the whim of a Greek historian [Appian], Armenia was included among the countries subordinate to the Seleucids, should we give it great significance? He could have been mistaken.

(1) Appiani, Syriaca, 55.

[446]

It was thought that Armenia was subject to Seleucus, because it probably belonged to Seleucus during the division of Alexander's legacy. But we know that the heirs [of Alexander] claimed to possess not only the countries they had already conquered, but also the countries that still remained to be conquered. One might say that they divided the bear's pelt before capturing the bear.

In fact, neither Seleucus nor any of his successors ever set foot in Armenia. Nothing supports a contrary view. No historian reports that the Seleucids were able to enter Armenia at any time. The only information we have about the alleged invasion of Armenia by Antiochus the Great [III] against King Xerxes of Armenia in no way proves that Armenia was subject to the Seleucids. Moreover, [the information] does not refer to Antiochus [III] the Great but, as we shall see below, to Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164).

It also is incorrect to attribute the division of Armenia to Artaxias and Zariadres, when we know that this division existed since the period when Armenia consisted of two satrapies.

We believe that the two generals of Antiochus mentioned here were the legitimate heirs of the two Armenian satrapies, which in 331 were under the rule of Orontes and Mithridates, and, earlier, in 401, were under Orontes and Tiribazus. Even if we accept the proposition that the Orontids had united all of Armenia under their rule after receiving the royal title, it is nevertheless possible that the overthrown dynasty could have reasserted its rights during the reigns of Artaxias and Zariadres. In that case, the partition referred to by Strabo should probably be understood in the sense that a part of the united [territory] had been detached and [subsequently] was restored to its former state.

Artaxias and Zariadres are two representatives of the dynasty that ruled Armenia earlier. They are called Antiochus' *strategoï* not because they were his satraps, but because they participated in the war against the Romans with their troops. They were among the generals of Antiochus as his allies, not as his subjects [(9)].

[447]

In the third century B.C. the political interests of the Seleucids were concentrated in Asia Minor, where they had to eliminate the expansionist ambitions of the Lagid [Ptolemaic] rulers of Egypt. Armenia was outside the theater of operations in this competition; it could ensure the progress of its own armed forces in conditions of peace, under its own dynasties. Consequently, if Cappadocia, Pontus, and Bithynia, in unfavorable conditions, were able to preserve their royal dynasties, why could not Armenia do the same, especially since it faced no threat from either side [(10)].

We have one reliable testimony that Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Pontus, Bithynia, and Greater and Lesser Armenia never accepted the rule of Alexander, his successors or any of their descendants, and that these countries had not borne the yoke of foreigners, and never obeyed any king other than the kings of their own countries (1). Thus, it is clear from this evidence that none of the countries listed above accepted the regime either of Alexander, his successors, or any of their descendants. During this tranquil period, Armenia prepared for its rise during the time of Artaxias and Zariadres.

These two celebrated rulers expanded the borders of their countries. They also ruled over many neighboring areas:

Caspiane [Country of the Casps], Phaunitis and Basoropeda captured from the Medes.
The slopes of Pariadres, Khorzanene, Gogarene - taken from the Ibers,
Karenitis, Derxene - taken from the Chalybes and Mossynoecians
Acilisene in the Antitaurus - from the Cataonians
Tamoritis - from the Syrians.

(1) Justini, 38, 7 [Nullam subjectarum sibi gentium expertam peregrina imperia: nullis usquam, nisi domestici regibus paruisse - crossed out in the author's handwriting]; Cappadociam velint, an Paphlagoniam, recensere, rursus Pontum, an Bithyniam, itemque Armeniam majorem minoremque: quarum gentium nullam neque Alexander ille, ~~qui~~ totam pacaverit Asiam, nec quispiam successorum ejus aut posterorum attigisset. [Justin's History of the World, Book 38, chapter 7](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

[448]

The center of Artaxias' kingdom was the valley of the Araxes River, where he founded a new capital Artashat/Artaxata, and named it after himself. The capital of Zariadres' realm was located in Sophene/Tsopk, and called Carcathiocerta.

The famous geographer [Strabo] obviously exaggerated the significance of the activities of Artaxias and Zariadres, adding to their name deeds that belonged to [periods and peoples] many generations before and after their rise. According to the same author, Acilisene had been conquered by the Armenians already in ancient times, since he believes that it was conquered by the companions of [the mythological] Armenus [from Thessaly], one of the possible ancestors of the Armenians. [Acilisene] thus presents itself as a cradle of Armenians. In that case, how can its conquest be attributed [solely] to Zariadres or Artaxias?

The Taron region, similarly, was not conquered during the reigns of these two kings. It already belonged to the Armenians in the time of Xenophon. In 401 B.C. we see the upper valley of the Euphrates, from which the regions called Karin and Derjan (Derxene) would be formed, inhabited by Chalybes and Mossynoeci. Their Armenization can be traced back to the time of Zariadres or Artaxias. However, the conquest of Caspiane and Phaunitis (Saunitis) follows their reigns and should be attributed to Tigranes [II the Great, 140-55 B.C.].

The expansion of the Armenian lands through new conquests, and their Armenianization, took place gradually over a long period of time. Artaxias and Zariadres, with their conquests, made it easy to assimilate different ethnic elements in order to achieve linguistic unity in favor of the Armenian language, as Strabo mentions. Apart from the kingdoms of Artaxias and Zariadres, there was a third kingdom, located within the borders of Lesser Armenia. Its satrap-king was a certain Mithridates, who was a contemporary of Artaxias and Zariadres.

Mithridates, like Artanes, was involved in the war between King Pharnaces [I] (B.C. 190-169) of Pontus and his neighbors: King Eumenes II of Pergamum (197-159), King Prusias II of Bithynia (182-149), and Ariarates IV of Cappadocia (220-163). Pharnaces' more than ambitious aims were such that they raised an alarm among his neighbors. [449] When Pharnaces moved in the direction of Sinope, the kings of Bithynia, Pergamon, and Cappadocia, allied and attacked him (1). Rome was concealed behind this alliance, while Pharnaces secured the help of the Seleucid king Seleucus IV (187-175). However, the Romans arrested the latter under a treaty they had with his predecessor. Pharnaces had only one ally—Mithridates, the king of Lesser Armenia. In the end, Pharnaces was unsuccessful and was forced to make peace. He returned what he had conquered, paid Ariarathes 90 talents, and Eumenes II 300 talents. Mithridates also was fined 300 talents as a punishment for treacherously siding with Pharnaces, despite his earlier alliance with Eumenes, king of Pergamon, and enemy of Pharnaces (2).

We are informed that in 179 B.C. the treaty signed between the warring parties included Artaxias, king of most of Armenia, as well as a certain Acusilocus (3). It is not known what status Artaxias had there, whether he took part in the affairs of Asia

Minor, and which party he sided with.

It seems natural that King Artaxias would have allied himself with his immediate neighbors, Lesser Armenia and Pontus, against those states in Asia Minor which were Roman protectorates.

In the end, the territories of Artaxias' neighbors did not suffice for the greedy king with his lust for land. Above all, he did not want to enter into an alliance with the Seleucid [king], who continued to remember the negative tendencies of the countries within his sphere of influence.

Subsequently, Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164) got into a confrontation with Artaxias. What started it? The usual passion for conquest. It is quite possible that to this passion

(1) Polybii Historiae XXIV, 10 [?9]; [Polybius' History, 24, 9-10](#) [in English, at Internet Archive];

XXV, 2-6 [Polybius' History, 25, 2-6](#) [in English, at Internet Archive];

XXVI, 6 (the agreement);

Titus Livius, Ab urbe condita, XX, 2.

(2) Polybii, Reliquiae, XXVI, 11.

² Polybii Reliquiae, XXVI, 11. ἐπεγράφη δὲ καὶ Μιθριδάτῃ τῷ τῆς Ἀρμενίας σατράπῃ τριακῶσα τάλαντα, διότι παραβὰς τὰς πρὸς Εὐμένην συνθήκας ἐπολέμησεν Ἀριαράθῃ.

(3) *Ibid.*, 12.

³ 12. Περιελήφθησαν δὲ ταῖς συνθήκαις τῶν μὲν κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν δυναστῶν Ἀρταξίας ὁ τῆς πλείστης Ἀρμενίας ἄρχων καὶ Ἀκουσίλοχος.

[450] was added hostility towards a man who had supported the aforementioned alliance against the Seleucids.

The same King Antiochus IV invaded the lands of Xerxes, king of Tsopk. Antiochus IV had a sister, Antiochis, who also was his spouse. From this unnatural union he had a son, Mithridates. Two cities in Cilicia, Tarsus and Mallos, were given to Antiochis as property. These cities rebelled against their mistress. Antiochus IV set out to quell the revolt (1). This activity preceded his invasion of Egypt, which was undertaken in 143 of the Seleucid Era, that is, in 170-169 B.C. (2).

Antiochus probably did not succeed in restoring the rights of his sister-wife. Soon we see him engaged in another activity on her behalf and also for their illicit son, Mithridates. It had entered Antiochus' mind to attack King Xerxes of [Tsopk], in his capital city of Arsamosata, a town located in Tsopk, on Armenian territory. It was situated in the so-called Marvellous Valley, Καλὸν πεδίων [Beautiful Plain], between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Xerxes repelled the attack. However, after a while, he feared that he might sustain some new attacks, and so he sent an envoy to make peace, requesting an interview with Antiochus. Those close to Antiochus thought that the time was right to capture Xerxes. Antiochus was advised not to let [Xerxes] slip out of his hand, [rather, to remove him] and to give Xerxes' kingdom to Mithridates, the illicit son of his sister Antiochis, who had been expelled from Cilicia (3).

(1) ["While those things were in doing, they of Tarsus and Mallosk made insurrection, because they were given to the king's concubine called Antiochis." Maccabees, Book II, 4. 30-31].

(2) Maccabees, Book I, 1. 21, compare Maccabees Book II. 5. 1-2.

(3) Polybii Historiae, VIII fr. 3 (ed. Teubner, II, p. 360). According to [Diodorus, XXXI, 19](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius], Ariarathes IV (220-163) was married to Antiochis, daughter of Antiochus [III] the Great. Antiochis, without her husband's knowledge, earlier had borne two sons, Ariarathes and Olophernes, and somewhat later, in a natural fashion [in wedlock], two daughters and a son, Mithridates who succeeded his father under the name of Ariarathes and who was given the title Philopator. It is interesting that the historian or his primary source has falsified the reality. He describes the legitimate sons as illegitimate and conversely, describes the illegitimate Mithridates as a legitimate son. [Continued]

[451] According to another source, Antiochus may have preferred a close friendship with the Armenian king Xerxes; he would have married his own wife-sister, Antiochis, to him. This is how he directed the woman's destiny. However, subsequently the latter became a criminal tool in the hands of her brother Antiochus IV, when, at his urging, she assassinated the unfortunate king [of Tsopk] (1).

This treacherous assassination must have taken place during the time of Antiochus' Parthian campaign. The aim of the invasion could have been to rouse the tribes of the Parthian states and to gain large sums of money to be able to pay the costs of the war being waged against the Jews. In the year 147 of the Seleucid Era, that is, in 166/165 B.C., Antiochus left his capital of Antioch, crossed the Euphrates River, and headed toward the upper provinces (2).

"Crossing through the upper provinces," it seems that Antiochus went to Ecbatana to plunder the famous temple of Nana (3). To get to Ecbatana, the capital of Media, he had to pass through Armenia.

It was at this time that King Antiochus might have decided to get rid of Xerxes. He similarly attacked King Artaxias. According to one source, Artaxias was taken prisoner; according to another source, he was subjugated (4).

This swapping of roles is explained by the fact that Mithridates seized the throne from Ariarathes' legitimate successors. See E. Babelon, *Les rois de Syrie, d'Arménie, et de Commagène*, Paris, 1890, p. CXCVI; J. Markwart, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte von Eran*, Heft I, Gottingen, 1896, S. 504 [20].

(1) Joannis Antiochensis, frag. 53 (C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, Paris, 1883, t. IV, p. 557).

(2) Maccabees Book I, III. 31-37.

(3) There is confusion in the text of Maccabees on this matter. According to Maccabees Book I. VI. 1-5, Antiochus left Limnos, retreating to Babylon. In such a case, when the same text (Maccabees Book II, IX. 1) relates to Persepolis, from which the king after his failure, headed toward Ecbatana, Ecbatana is preferable to Limnos or Persepolis.

(4)

Appiani, *Syriaca*, 45-46. ἐστράτευσε δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ Ἀρταξίαν τὸν Ἀρμενίων βασιλέα, καὶ αὐτὸν ἐλὼν ἐτελεύτησεν ἐνναετὲς παιδίον ἀπολιπών.

[He also made an expedition against Artaxias, king of Armenia, and took him prisoner. 46. Epiphanes died, leaving a son, Antiochus, nine years of age..].

[Appiani, Syriaca, 45-46](#) [at Internet Archive, bilingual] *Ibidem.*, 66. [Continued]

[452] The account of Antiochus' Parthian invasion, as it appears in the Bible, is not credible. The monetary motive attributed to this invasion is not serious at all. As for the route supposedly taken by Antiochus, its features are confusing and contradictory. It is easy to accept the fact that the historical basis of the Parthian invasion was the invasion of "Upper Armenia" (1) by Antiochus. Before heading toward Israel, the Seleucid king wanted to insure himself against [attack from] the direction of Armenia. He raided Tsopk and carried out what he had planned long ago, namely, to establish his illegitimate son, Mithridates, on Xerxes' throne, after the latter's wife, his sister-wife, had murdered him. Artaxias, the king of Greater Armenia, might have opposed such an enthronement. This made war between Artaxias and Antiochus inevitable.

The details of this war remain unknown to us [(11)]. After the war, Antiochus was ill—probably wounded—and died shortly afterwards. Undoubtedly, the wrath of the goddess Nana or the cunning of her priests played no role in the destruction of the king.

It should be noted that it was the sudden death of Antiochus or the opposition of Artaxias that prevented [Antiochus] from gaining the throne of Tsopk for his son, Mithridates. The failure was compensated in another way,

66: Ἀντιόχου δὲ δώδεκα οὐ πλήρουν, ἐν οἷς Ἀρταξίαν τὸν Ἀρμένιον εἶλε, καὶ ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἐστράτευσεν ἐπὶ ἕκτον Πτολεμαῖον.

[Appiani, Syriaca, 66](#) [at Internet Archive, bilingual] "Antiochus reigned not quite twelve years, in the course of which he captured Artaxias the Armenian and made an expedition into Egypt against Ptolemy VI..."

C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, Paris, 1883, t. II, p. X, 9. According to Diodorus

(*Bibliotheca* 31, 17a) ὁ δὲ Ἀντίοχος ἰσχυρὸν κατ' ἐκείνους τοὺς χρόνους
ὥς οὐδεὶς τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων ἐστράτευσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν καὶ νικήσας ἡνάγκασε ποιεῖν τὸ
προσταττόμενον.

[Diodorus, Bibliotheca, 31, 17a](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius] "Antiochus, whose strength at this period was unmatched by any of the other kings, marched against him, was victorious, and reduced him to submission."

(1) According to Joannes Antiochensis, Antiochus, after killing Xerxes, *τὴν δὲ Περσῶν βασιλείαν αὐθις ἀνεκτήσατο* "immediately ruled over the Persian kingdom" (Const. Porphyrogeniti, *De insidiis* 64,12), however, we are not convinced that these words do not bear the influence of the history of the Maccabees.

(2) Maccabees, Book II, I. 13-17.

[453] for we next see Mithridates seated on the throne of Cappadocia, under the name of Ariarathes V (162-130 B.C.).

When Demetrius I Soter (162-150), brother of Antiochus, usurped the throne in 162, he declared war on King Ariarathes IV of Cappadocia (220-163). The reason or motivation for this was that Ariarathes had refused to marry his sister. Ariarathes' unjustly overthrown brother, Olophernes/Orophernes, took refuge with Demetrius, who, in turn, provoked him against the brother who had hurt him (1).

The sister in question was the same Antiochis mentioned earlier. She was offered in marriage to Ariarathes, who rejected the match. This is a possible fact, and although it cannot be confirmed by other [sources] on the subject, it does not lose any of its likely authenticity. Ariarathes paid dearly for his refusal. Demetrius, outraged by the king of Cappadocia, usurped the throne from his successor and son, who handed it over to Mithridates, [also known as] Ariarathes V (162-130), son of Antiochis.

Olophernes, observing that Demetrius was much more interested in his clanmate Mithridates than in the injustice of his own fate, left him and joined the inhabitants of Antioch, who then were in rebellion against Demetrius.

The hypothesis according to which Ariarathes' two sons are presented as illegitimate, while Mithridates is presented as legitimate, is undoubtedly deliberate, and aimed at saving the Cappadocian royal dynasty's reputation. This distortion was greatly facilitated by the benefits that Mithridates was able to derive from his distinguished name (2).

Demetrius had some motivation to arm against Artaxias (3), but what this motivation was is not known. In any case, the issue of Tsopk had still not been resolved, and at some point, it caused a rift between Artaxias and Mithridates.

(1) Justini XXXV: propter fastiditas sororis nuptias infestus.

[Justin, Book 35](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(2) See Diodorus' praise of him, *Diodori XXXI*, cap. 19, 21. See also the same in Polybii *Reliquiae*, XXXI, 15a.

[Diodorus, Book 31, Chapters 19, 21](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(3) *Diodori, Excerpta*; C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, t. II, p. XII, 13.

[454] After the death of Xerxes, the throne of Tsopk did not pass to Mitrobuzanes, who was his brother, we believe. Artaxias seems to have expelled Mitrobuzanes in order to seize his state. Mithridates was interested in the disposition of Tsopk due to his supposed inheritance of it from his mother, Antiochis. He preferred to reestablish the refugee prince Mitrobuzanes on his throne. It was then that Artaxias, eager to expand his sphere, entered into negotiations with Mithridates-Ariarathes to seek his consent to kill "the second of two lads" and to divide Tsopk between them.

Ariarathes, who shunned such insidious acts, denounced the envoys and in a letter to Artaxias, urged him to refrain from such criminal deeds. With such behavior, Ariarathes' fame increased even more and, through his decency, Mitrobuzanes was restored to his patrimonial principality (1).

Artaxias was influenced by the noble exhortation of Mithridates-Ariarathes, it seems to us, to renounce his plan and, beyond this, to show him more respect than previously.

From the expression Τὸν νεανίσκον ἑκάτερον [the "other young man"] it seems that Mitrobuzanes was the brother of Xerxes, that they were still young, and that their father was Zariades. Tsopk belonged to Zariadres. One of his descendants was Artanes, a contemporary of Tigranes, the King of Kings. Tsopk, which was the subject of the claims of its neighbors, Syria, Greater Armenia, and Cappadocia, preserved itself by maneuvering between three mutually neutralizing enemies.

The three parts of the territory of the Armenians—Greater Armenia, Tsopk, and Lesser Armenia—all had their own royal dynasties.

Greater Armenia corresponded, essentially, to the Eastern Armenia of Orontes; Tsopk, to the Western Armenia of Tiribazus (the southern and western parts of Armenia belonged to Artanes), and Lesser Armenia corresponded in part to the 19th Satrapy, because its kings ruled lands extending to Trebizond.

(1) Diodori XXXI, cap. 22.

[Diodorus, 31, Chapter 22](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[455] The [administrative] divisions of Darius changed in the next century. Xenophon (1) already is aware that the great satrapy of Cappadocia was divided into three parts: Hellespontine Phrygia, Greater Phrygia, and Cappadocia. The peoples of Pontus—the Chalybes, Chaldeans, Macrons, Colchians, the Mossynoeci, and Tiberians—became independent (2). They were the ones who formed the 19th satrapy. In 401 B.C. Armenia probably had two satraps: one satrap, and one *hyparchus*. The satrap ruled Eastern Armenia, and the hyparchus ruled Western Armenia. It seems to us that these divisions corresponded, in fact, to the 13th and 18th satrapies, but with some changes. Part of the 13th satrapy, united with the 18th satrapy, formed the Eastern [satrapy], and the other part of the former 13th satrapy, including Lesser Armenia, formed Western Armenia as before. In the person of one of their leaders, as a satrap, we see Orontes, while Tiribazus was called the hyparchus of Western Armenia. In this case, the word "hyparchus" corresponded appropriately to the term satrap, as Tiribazus was a very powerful person [and unlikely] to submit to the rule of Orontes.

We do have some information about their dynasties. The origin of Artaxias and Zariadres already is known. It is more difficult to ascertain the identity of Mithridates, the satrap-king of Lesser Armenia. There is a tendency to confuse him with Mithridates-Ariarathes (3) or to attach him to the family of Mithridates of Pontus. We already had the opportunity to mention Mithridates, the son of Udiastes. When King Darius' son-in-law, Terituchmes, was trying to get rid of his wife to marry his own sister Roxana, a prince named Udiastes betrayed him to Parisatis, his stepmother. This Mithridates, the son of Udiastes, took possession of the city of Zaris and then handed it over to the son of Terituchmes. We are of the opinion that Terituchmes could have belonged to the dynasty of Tiribazus. It seems that the city of Zaris is the well known city of Zara in Lesser Armenia. Udiastes and Mithridates must be connected

(1) Cyropaedia, VIII, 6,7.

(2) Anabasis, VII, 8, 25.

(3) Polybii, Reliquiae, XXXI, 15a.

[456] with Lesser Armenia. Artaxerxes punished Udiastes and gave his satrapy to Mithridates. It seems to me that this reference must be connected with the satrapy of Lesser Armenia. Here, it probably makes sense to accept that the Udiastes-Mithridates family continued to rule Lesser Armenia, and that Mithridates, who in 179 B.C., was Pharnaces' ally, came from the same family [(12)].

3. [Armenia during the reign of Tigranes II the Great]

Artaxias ruled until about 160 B.C. During the years 162-[161] he fought against Demetrius [(13)]. Mithridates the Great (123-88), king of the Parthians, gloriously ended many wars against his neighbors, defeated the Scythians several times, and finally *attacked the king of Armenia, Ortoa[dis]tis* (instead of Ortoasdis) (1). On this occasion, the narrator tells the story of the origin of the Armenians, believing that it would be unfair to say nothing about a kingdom which, after the kingdom of the Parthians, is the largest among all the kingdoms of Asia, (1,100,000) feet and seven hundred cubits wide.

[According to this account], the founder of Armenia was one of the Armenian generals of Jason [leader of the mythical Argonauts].

Then we read: After the war against Armenia, Mithridates, who had become king of Parthia, was overthrown because of his cruelty. His brother, Orodes, ascended the throne. The narrator has inadvertently confused two kings with the same name, Mithridates, Mithridates II or the Great, and Mithridates III (57 B.C.), brother of Orodes I (57-37) (3).

(1) Ac postremum Ortoasdisti Armenioram regi bellum intulit [and later he started a war against Artavasd, king of the Armenians]. Justini, XXII, 2; Trogi Pompeii Prologus, 42.

(2) A thousand miles equals 1.5 thousand kilometers, 1100 miles is 1650 kilometers, 700 miles is 1050 km. Compare Poseidonius according to Strabo 720x1440 miles becomes 720x360 miles (4000x8000; 4000x2000).

(3) [Trogus prol. 42. utque Phrati. successit rex Mithridates cognomine Magnus qui Armeniis bellum intulit. Inde repetitae origines Armeniorum et situs...*Idem.*, 41. Successores deinde eius Artabanus et Tigranes cognomine deus a quo subacta est Media et Mesopotamia. "Phraates was succeeded by King Mithridates, called the Great who [Continued]

[457]

It was during this war that Tigranes could have been given as a hostage to the Parthians (1). He was released at the cost of surrendering 70 Armenian valleys to the Parthians (2).

This Tigranes was the son of another Tigranes (3). What is the relationship between these Tigranes and Artavasdes? Tigranes' son, Tigranes, ascended the throne in 95 B.C. The year can be verified with the help of a reference, according to which, in 70 B.C., when Appius Claudius was presented to Tigranes, the latter had reigned for twenty-five years (4). The year of Tigranes' death is known only approximately. In 54, at the time of Crassus' invasion, Artavasdes was seated on Tigranes' throne, so Tigranes already was deceased. However, he still was alive in February of 56, according to an oration of Cicero (5). He died in 56-54, say in 55 B.C., and was eighty-five years old (6). Therefore, his date of birth would have been in 140. His father, Tigranes, was at least 20-25 years old then, and must have been born in the time of Ariarathes (V). Thus, he could have been Artaxias' son. Artavasdes, who was on the throne until 95, must be the eldest son of the same Tigranes.

Artaxias seems to have left the throne to his son, Tigranes, who had two sons, Artavasdes and Tigranes. Artavasdes took the throne first, followed by Tigranes. The latter ascended the throne in 95. We must accept the fact that Artavasdes was the ruler attacked by the king of the Parthians, at the start of his

Hence the dual origin. Artabanus and Tigranes, with the title of "deity," succeeded him, who subdued Media and Mesopotamia]. Joseph Markwart has suggested that the name Artabanus should be Artabazus, Artavasdes, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Sage von Iran, Zeitschrift der Deutsche Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, 49, p. 645. Compare Orosius VI. 19. 3. Orosius names Tigranes' son Artabanus, instead of Artavasdes].

(1) Justini, XXXVIII, 3. Erat eo tempore Tigranes rex Armeniae, obses Parthis ante multum temporis datus, nec olim ab eisdem in regnum patrum remissus [The king of Armenia, at this time, was Tigranes, who had long before been committed as a hostage to the Parthians, but had subsequently been sent back to take possession of his father's throne]. Justin [Book 38, 3](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(2) Strabonis XI, 14, 15.
Strabo's *Geography*, [Book 11, chapter 14](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

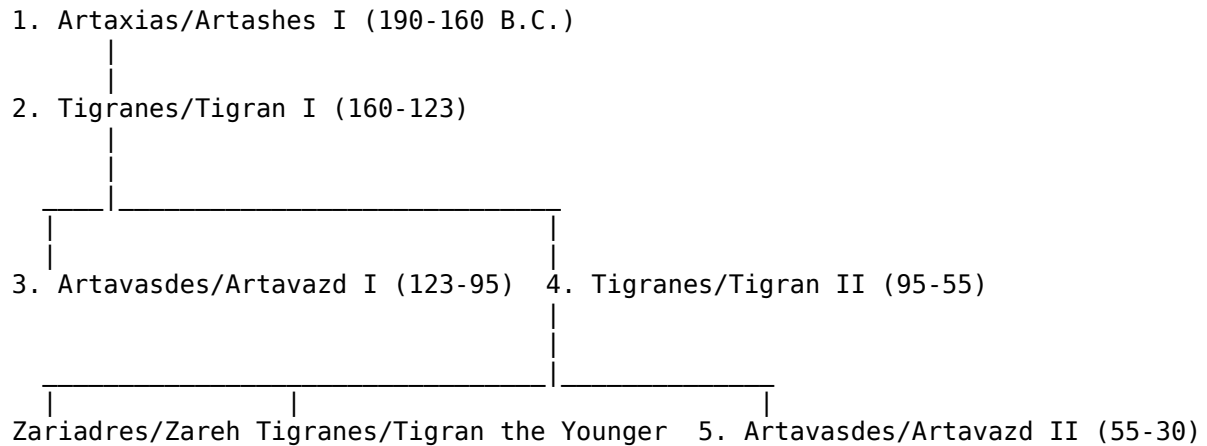
(3) Appiani Syriaca, 48.
Appian's [Syriaca, 48](#) [bilingual, at Internet Archive].

(4) Plutarchi Lucullus, 21.
Plutarch's [Lucullus, 21](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(5) Pro Sestio, 59 [(14)]

(6) Tigranes, king of Armenia, he whom Lucullus warred against, was 85 years of age when he died, and that was the result of an illness (Macrobii 15).

[458] reign, in 120, in the period after the war fought by the Parthian king against the Scythians. Thus we may construct the following genealogical chart.



If we accept that at the time Tigranes [II] was handed over as a hostage, he was about 17 to 20 years old (sources indicate that he was a young man at the time), it would coincide with B.C. 123-120, the period of the invasion of King Mithridates [II the Great], king of the Parthians.

Tigranes was freed from captivity, in exchange for territorial concessions, long before he ascended the throne. He took part in the government of his brother Artavasdes and gained experience in the field of government affairs [(15)]. Some of his achievements are probably to be attributed to the reign of Artavasdes.

It is not possible to specify the chronology of Tigranes' territorial conquests. The first blow probably was directed at Tsopk. We saw that the King of Cappadocia did not approve of Artaxias' plan to divide Tsopk. As a reward for this "disinterested" service, Cappadocia captured the fortress of Tomisa on the Euphrates, which overlooked the bridge over the Euphrates River and at the same time could serve as a most important [459] way station on one of the main roads from Asia Minor to Mesopotamia and beyond. Cappadocia, subsequently in need of Tsopk's help, was forced to return the Tomisa fortress for 100 talents (1).

The political unification of the Armenian lands was the first concern of the king, who thought about the strength of his country. The king of Tsopk, Artanes, was probably the son of Mitrobuzanes. Tigranes expelled him, thus uniting the [separated] parts of Armenia.

The second blow, after which Armenia received Gordyene/Korduk, whose king Zarbienus in the fight against the Parthian king Mithridates II, with the aim of helping [the king of Cappadocia] Ariarathes Philopator [(16)] [a passage is missing in the manuscript], for Atrpatakan. Advancing, the Parthians conquered Media and Persia, becoming Armenia's neighbor. King Mithridates II was to return to Tigranes the 70 valleys he had seized from Artavasdes, ostensibly in exchange for Tigranes' liberation. The defeated Parthians signed a treaty with Tigranes (2). They were obliged to give up even Atrpatakan to Tigranes. This achievement was reinforced by the marriage of Tigranes' daughter to Mithridates, king of Atrpatakan (3).

The kings of Iberia and Aghuania recognized the sovereignty of Tigranes. On this side, the Armenian borders reached to the [Great] Caucasus mountain range.

[Tigranes] put pressure especially on the southern borders. The Seleucids living in the West could not resist his

(1) Strabonis, XII, 21; XIV, 2, 29.

(2) Justini, XL, 1. ...omnes in Tigranen, regem Armeniae, consensere, instructum praeter domesticas uires et Parthica societate et Mithridatis adfinitate [Justin, Book 40, chapter 1: ...Tigranes king of Armenia, who, in addition to the strength of his own kingdom, was supported by an alliance with Parthia, and by a matrimonial connection with Mithridates]. [(17)]

(3) Cassius Dio XXXVI, 16. According to Isidore of Charaxes (Isidori Characeni Mansiones Parthicae, Geographi graeci minores, I, 250-251), the Armenians had penetrated as far as Ecbatana and completely burned down the palace of the satrap-king. Probably the satrap was one Darius, whose name [is mentioned] [in the description] of Pompey's triumph (Diodori, XL, 4 ed. Didot., II, 581; Appiani Mithridatica, 106). The Persian king at the time, Mithridates I [B.C. 170-139] had subdued Media, where he designated as governor Bagasis (Justini XLI, 6). Darius must be a descendant of Bagasis.

[460] advance. The Parthians did not feel strong enough to stop him. The kings of Commagene, Osroene, and Adiabene were ranked among the subordinates of the Armenian king (1).

Tigranes crossed the Euphrates and subjected to his will Syria and Phoenicia in 84/87 B.C. The last Seleucids, ousted from their thrones but laden with treasures, went to Rome to ask for help. Palestine and Egypt were counting the days before Tigranes' invasion. The Jews hurried to send an embassy to Tigranes (2).

The last Seleucid king, Philippus [I] (92-83), was probably killed during the war. His son, Philippus II, escaped to Cilicia (3), and Antiochus escaped to Roman Asia. The city of Antioch became one of the residences of Tigranes. The country was placed under the administration of Magadates (Bagarat [Bagadates]) (4). Tigranes "enjoyed the [Syrian] throne peacefully for eighteen years, having no need to attack or resist anyone" (84-66 B.C.) (5).

In the west, Tigranes conquered Cappadocia and Cilicia. Tigranes uprooted the population of Soli city (6) and moved it to Armenia (7). He often invaded the Cappadocian cities of Mazaka and eleven other cities [uprooting] a total of 300,000 people and resettling them in his new capital (8).

In 74 B.C. Nicodemus, the last king of Bithynia, died leaving a will in which he bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman people. Rome thus became the dangerous neighbor of Pontus. From that moment on, confrontation

(1) Strabonsis, XI, 14, 15.

Strabo's Geography [Book 11](#), Chapters 14, 15 [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) Antiquitatum Judaicarum [Book XIII] 16, 4. De bello Judaico, I, 5, 3.

Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* [Book 13, Chapter 16, 4](#) [at Internet Archive, in English].

Josephus' *Wars of the Jews* [Book 1, Chapter 5, 3](#) [at Internet Archive, in English].

(3) Justini, XL, 1.

Justin [40, 1](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(4) Appiani, Syriaca, 48.

(5) Justini, XL, 1. Appian calculates 14 years, B.C. 84-70 (Appiani, 17).

Justin [40, 1](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(6) Plutarchi, Pompeius, 28;

Plutarch's [Pompey, 28](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(7) Cassius Dio, XXXVI, 37.

(8) Appiani Mithridatica, 67; Strabo, XI, 14, 15; XII, 2, 9; P'avstos *** [(18)]. The depopulation of Cappadocia and Cilicia by Tigranes, is placed in 77 B. C. by T. Reinach, relying on Strabo and Plutarch (Strabo XI, 14, 15; Plutarchi Lucullus, 21). The founding of Tigranacerta had to be preceded by the conquest of Syria, which had occurred by 84 B.C.

[461] with Mithridates [Eupator] became inevitable, so Rome was anxious to appoint a commander suitable for waging the impending war. They were well aware that the struggle with Mithridates was "not dead, but only had come to a pause." The most prominent man at that time was Pompey, who surpassed all others to such an extent that—if he could put an end to the war [he was waging] in Spain—he could be appointed commander of the war against Mithridates.

In the year of the 176th Olympiad (73 B.C.), [The Roman] consul Lucullus, who was jealous of Pompey's glory, sought to be appointed [commander of the army waging war] against Mithridates to inflate his own glory with spectacular feats. At that time the man who controlled the course of political affairs in Rome was [Publius] Cethegus, the tribune of the people, "who had a special enmity towards Lucullus, hated his way of life, which was characterized by disgraceful love affairs, shamelessness and promiscuity."

Lucullus used all means possible to achieve his goal. The position of governor of Cilicia was vacant at that time. He sought the post with the expectation that if he were physically in Asia, in Cilicia, he would be assigned to wage war in adjacent countries. His path to the goal was "neither honest nor commendable." Lucullus applied to an influential courtesan [named Praecia], who was Cethegus' favorite, to bribe Cethegus with gifts and flatteries, by which means Lucullus succeeded in being appointed governor of Cilicia and leading the war against Mithridates.

Lucullus was in Asia as a general in the army. "From the beginning, Mithridates acted in a proud and ceremonial manner during his attacks on the Romans, but he had no real strength, it was just an outward glow to make an impression." Then defeats forced Mithridates to change his attitude. To resume the war, he rebuilt his army using Roman techniques. The chaotic mass of weapons, gold and precious stones, which he used to display, was set aside. He cast more swords and made stronger shields using Roman techniques, and assembled better-trained armored horses. Thus, he raised twelve myriads (120,000) of infantry. **[462]** They were arranged as Roman phalanxes, with almost sixteen thousand cavalry and a hundred chariots each.

The boats also were changed. Instead of having gilded canopies, baths for courtesans, and luxurious apartments for women, his ships now became filled with weapons, and missiles and munitions of war.

After these preparations, Mithridates invaded Bithynia. He was welcomed everywhere because "...all Asia suffered a relapse into its former distempered condition, afflicted, as it was, past bearing by Roman money-lenders and tax-gatherers."

At the same time, Lucullus, his colleague, and another consul, Marcus Cotta, were instructed to take command of the fleet to protect Bithynia. The greedy Cotta, who was thirsty for victory, not wanting to share its delight with Lucullus, hurried to embark on [military] activities. However, simultaneously losing on land and at sea, Cotta was trapped and besieged at Chalcedon. He expectantly turned his gaze to Lucullus.

There were those who advised Lucullus to leave Cotta there, to move forward and enter the kingdom of Mithridates, which they would find defenseless. However, the commander said that "he would rather save at least one Roman than take everything that belongs to the enemy."

When Archelaus, his general who had abandoned Mithridates, assured Lucullus that his appearance in Pontus alone would be enough for him to become its ruler, Lucullus replied that "he was at least as courageous as the hunter; he would not give the wild beasts the slip and stalk their empty lairs."

Having said this, he prepared to advance toward Mithridates with 30,000 infantry and 2,500 cavalry under his command. Evading battle, he wanted to gain time. It should be noted that the story of Lucullus' invasion has a fabulous quality to it. Undoubtedly, the arrogant general did his best to hide the truth from those who had sent him. He did not dare to meet his opponent in the open field, but waited patiently until famine overcame him. **[463]** Lack of food resources forced Mithridates to retreat to his own borders. The arrival of Lucullus was of no benefit to the besieged cities.

During the retreat of the Pontic army, Lucullus dared to attack Mithridates near the Rhyndacus River, "stealing 6,000 horses, countless herds of pack animals, and capturing 15,000 people."

Lucullus attacked him a second time near the Granicus River, "capturing a large number of people, and killing 20,000."

The Roman general also was aided by miraculous events. "But presently, as they were on the point of joining battle, with no apparent change of weather, but all on a sudden, the sky burst asunder, and a huge, flame-like body was seen to fall between the two armies. In shape, it was most like a wine-jar, and in colour, like molten silver. Both sides were astonished at the sight, and separated. This marvel, as they say, occurred in Phrygia, at a place called Otryae." Another time, a sacred heifer being bred for the goddess, left the herd, swam alone through the straits, and presented herself before [the city of] Cyzicus, which was being besieged [by Mithridates]. At the same time, the goddess promised in a dream to "bring the Libyan flute against the Pontic trumpet," that is, to raise a strong south wind against Mithridates' [war] machines, as in fact happened the

next day. Once again, a storm came to Lucullus' rescue. "When Mithridates was hurrying to escape to Pontus, a fierce storm struck his ships or sank them."

This is how [supposedly] diligent [Roman] historians described the destruction of "thirty myriads or at least 300,000 people, both fighters and camp followers," after which Mithridates, chased by the victorious Lucullus, fled to Pontus.

It is highly unlikely that the total count of Mithridates' army could have reached 300,000. These exaggerations and incredible colorings, which were designed to inspire confidence in Lucullus' victory, really do just the opposite. It was not the sword of the Roman general that forced Mithridates to retreat, but famine.

"Many advised Lucullus to delay further warfare." This means that the commander or those close to him hesitated to pursue Mithridates, something which makes Lucullus' victory doubtful.

Despite this advice, Lucullus decided to advance towards Mithridates. He crossed Bithynia and Galatia, and entered the kingdom of Pontus. Initially, famine was so widespread, **[464]** that "thirty thousand Galatians followed in his train, each carrying a bushel of grain upon his shoulders; but as he advanced and mastered everything, he found himself in the midst of such plenty that an ox sold in his camp for a drachma, and a man-slave for four, while other booty had no value at all.

During the invasion, the Romans began with attacks and robbed and looted the area as far as the plains of Themiscyra and Thermodon.

[The soldiers] started complaining about Lucullus, accusing him of not capturing any city by [military] force to hand over to them for lucrative looting (such as the city of Amisus). He was reprimanded for his slow advance and for stops in front of secondary fortresses and cities, which allowed Mithridates to strengthen himself. " 'That,' he said, 'is the very thing I want, and I am sitting here to get it. I want the man to become powerful again, and to get together a force with which it is worth our while to fight, in order that he may stand his ground, and not fly when we approach. Do you not see that he has a vast and trackless desert behind him? The Caucasus, too, is near, with its many hills and dells, which are sufficient to hide away in safety ten thousand kings who decline to fight. And it is only a few days' journey from Cabira into Armenia and over Armenia there sits enthroned Tigranes, King of Kings, with forces which enable him to cut the Parthians off from Asia, transplant Greek cities into Media, sway Syria and Palestine, put to death the successors of Seleucus, and carry off their wives and daughters into captivity. This king is a kinsman of Mithridates, his son-in-law. He will not be content to receive him as a suppliant, but will make war against us. If we strive, therefore, to eject Mithridates from his kingdom, we shall run the risk of drawing Tigranes down upon us. He has long wanted an excuse for coming against us, and could not get a better one than that of being compelled to aid a man who is his kinsman and a king. Why, then, should we bring this to pass, and teach Mithridates, when he does not know it, with what allies he must carry on war against us? Why help to drive him, against his wish and as a last resource, into the arms of Tigranes **[465]**, instead of giving him time to equip himself from his own resources and get fresh courage? Then we shall fight with Colchians and Tibareni and Cappadocians, whom we have often overcome, rather than with Medes and Armenians' " (1).

Lucullus remained camped before the city of Amisus for a long while. At the end of winter, he instructed Murena to continue the siege, while he went to anticipate Mithridates, who was at Cabira. Mithridates had with him 40,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry. Mithridates, defeated, fled to Tigranes in Armenia. Cabira and other fortresses—with the treasures that were in them—were surrendered to Lucullus. Mithridates' sister, Nyssa, was taken prisoner. [The king's] other sisters and wives, who apparently were in safety, were killed by order of Mithridates, who, on the run, immediately sent the eunuch Bacchides to poison them. Among them were the king's two unmarried sisters of about forty years of age, Roxana and Statira, and two of his Greek wives, Berenice and Monime.

Lucullus advanced as far as Talaura, where he learned that Mithridates had fled to Tigranes four days earlier. He returned, subjugated the Chaldeans and the Tibereni, conquered Lesser Armenia, and sent his wife's brother, Appius Claudius, to Tigranes to demand the person of Mithridates.

Next, Lucullus returned to Amisus, which was under siege. The city was captured. Then Lucullus headed to the cities of [the Roman province of] Asia to fight against the [Roman] contractors and usurers who were keeping the population dependent. Sulla had imposed a tax reaching 20,000 talents on the province of Asia. In Asia, however, the tenants paid twice as much - 40,000 talents. By raising the interest rate, the tenants owed twelve times the [previous] debt. [Thanks to Lucullus' intervention,] all debts were paid off within four years.

(1) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 14.
Plutarch's *Lucullus* [Book 14, 3 ff.](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[466]

The Usurers at Rome Complained against Lucullus.

Chronicle of Events

Bithynia's last king, Nicomedes [III] died in the year 74 B.C. There exists a quadradrachma of Nicomedes dated 224 according to the Bithynian dating (which corresponds to the period from October of 74 B.C. to October of 73 B.C. (1). Plutarch relates, according to Sallust (2), that Lucullus deployed against him troops which were obliged to spend two winters on the road: first, besieging Cyzicus (73-72 B.C.), second, at Amisus (72-71 B.C.).

According to Phlegon of Tralles, Lucullus passed the first year of the 177th Olympiad encamped before Cabira (3). The 177th Olympiad corresponds to the years 72-68 B.C. The first year began in August 72 and extended to August of 71.

Lucullus, after the capture of Cabira and the flight of Mithridates, sent his brother-in-law, Appius Claudius, to Tigranes, demanding that he surrender Mithridates.

Appius initially was accompanied by members of the royal guard, who obliged him to make a useless journey for many days. Then an independent-minded Assyrian informed him about a direct route. Appius then dismissed his barbarian guides, crossed the Euphrates, and in a few days, arrived in Antioch, called Epidapne. Here he received an order to wait for Tigranes. At the time, *the king was absent, busy in Phoenicia*. Appius represented the Roman position to many of the country's princes, including Zarbienus, king of Gordyene [Korduk], who, like other princes, had submitted to the Armenians with a sense of remorse.

The story of the embassy of Appius belongs to the ambassador himself. This embassy's farcical and more than strange

(1) *Catalogue du Musée Britannique*, p. 215, No. 8, Eutropius, VI, 6.
[Eutropius, Book 6, 6](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(2) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 23.
Plutarch's [Lucullus, 23](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(3) C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, t. III, p. 606.
[volume 3, p. 606](#), at Google Books.

[Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum](#) volumes, at Internet Archive.

[467] behavior is completely inconsistent with the rituals practiced in the East since time immemorial. According to international agreement or custom, the embassy that went to a king was greeted at the border by the king's staff and led to the capital. Who are the king's followers here? Undoubtedly, the officials whom the king ordered to receive and to guide the ambassador to him. The story of the independent-minded Assyrian is astonishing. He can only be a secret spy in the ambassador's service.

The ambassador was probably received at the Tomisa station in Tsopk, in the direction of Mygdonia, and escorted to Tigranocerta or farther away to the more distant Antioch. Appius managed to mislead his followers, the royal envoys, with the help of an independent-minded Assyrian "to incline to his side the many rulers of the country, including, firstly, King Zarbinenus of Gordyene."

It is difficult to understand why his companions had to oblige him to make such a useless tour. Appius himself went as far as Gordyene to slander it.

Many cities subjugated in the recent past might secretly have sent deputies to Appius. Such a situation is more in line with the mission of the embassy. He promised them Lucullus' help and advised them not to pay tribute at any time. The domination of the Armenians was "intolerable and disgusting." This is a purely personal assessment, which belongs either

to Plutarch or to Appian himself. What we do know from Plutarch is that, on the contrary, the cities of Greece itself and all of Asia Minor hated Roman rule. Plutarch confirms that not only the cities of Bithynia but all of [the province of Roman] Asia were subjected to intolerable treatment by Roman money-lenders and contractors. It is for this reason that Mithridates was received everywhere with gladness (1). The same Plutarch says that "Families were forced to sell their

(1) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 7.

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 7](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[468] comely sons and virgin daughters, and cities their votive offerings, pictures, and sacred statues," (1) etc.

"The betrayal of the proconsuls, the robberies of the mercenaries, the transgression of the judges, have aroused such hatred for the name of the Romans that Asia extends its hands," says another narrator, "and cries out to Mithridates with a pleading cry" (2).

In Asia they had an unfavorable and negative idea about the Romans. "The founders of Rome, in their own opinion, were suckled by a female wolf; they were a people of wolves, insatiably thirsting for blood and power, and as for their dynasties, they were greedy and expropriators" (3).

Under these conditions, one should not be surprised by the frenzied determination with which cities such as Sinope, Amisus, and Amasia resisted Lucullus' army. In such a situation, why should Mithridates' sovereign state be [seen as] desirable while Tigranes' [rule], at the same time was considered, "intolerable and repellent?" The reason was that Tigranes had become "indescribably arrogant, insolent, and self-assured as a result of his unanticipated victories. [Tigranes] subjugated many nations, broke the power of the Parthians, filled Mesopotamia with Greeks, many of whom he had transported from Cilicia and Cappadocia. He deported the tent-dwelling Arab tribes from their country and settled them in his neighborhood, with the aim of increasing trade. He was fawned over by a group of kings, four of whom he always kept by his side as servants, dressed in short *chitons*, running alongside his horse when he rode out, and when he sat at the reception, they stayed standing by his side."

Indeed, these are really surprising reasons. Could it be that conquests were the cause of such hatred? If that were the case, the reputation of the Romans would have been the worst in the world. The fact that Tigranes "filled Mesopotamia with Greeks" is more than an exaggeration. We know that the Armenian king conquered twelve cities in Cappadocia and Cilicia

(1) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 20.

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 20](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) Justini XXXVIII. 7.

[Justin, Book 38, chapter 7](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(3) Op. cit., XXXVIII. 6.

[Justin, Book 38, chapter 6](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

[469], part of whose populations were deported to reside in the new capital, Tigranocerta/Tigranakert. It is not known whether this deportation took place by force or otherwise [through inducements]. Tigranocerta was not the first or last city to be founded in Asia with this way.

[Certain Roman historians] in their blind rage against Tigranes, even present what is praiseworthy—nomadic Arabs forced to change their way of life and become sedentary—in a peculiar light, "to encourage trade."

As for the four kings who ran alongside Tigranes, the depiction is accurate, though distorted in the last point. The matter concerns the four viceroys called *bdeskhhs* who were sub-rulers, who surrounded the Armenian king, [and whose descendants] we see even later, occupying the first ranks in the Arsacid/Arshakuni court. It is utterly absurd to say that the latter ran on foot alongside the king's horse. These figures were deliberately confused with the messengers who accompanied the king, going in front of him as he rode off. With the perseverance typical of the East, this custom has survived to the present day in Persia, where the lowliest of khans performs this function for the Shah (1). The obvious bias of our source, which leads him to search for the absurd everywhere, often ends only by making the writer himself seem ridiculous.

Appius finally was presented to the king, declaring that his mission was either to take Mithridates or to declare war on Tigranes. Lucullus' envoy seemed to notice [underlying] emotion on the king's smiling face, which was due to Appius' uncompromising and direct speech, "[the likes of] which [Tigranes] probably was hearing for the first time in twenty-five years, during his reign over many kingdoms." Tigranes tells Appius that he will not surrender Mithridates, and that if the Romans started a war, he would push them back.

Tigranes then sent precious gifts to Appius, but, because he refused to accept them, Tigranes sent even more valuable gifts. Finally, Appius selects only one cup, and returns all the rest. Then he hurries back to Lucullus.

(1) In our day, in 1917 for [shah] [name illegible].

[470]

The author of this story, undoubtedly, is Appius himself. No one but he could have been aware of these details at the scene of Tigranes' interview. In his own words, Appius displayed courage, and Tigranes, despite his restrained speech, was generous enough to entice him with gifts. In that case, where does this bombastic tone, this mockery of the king, come from? Appius is not honest. He seems to be hurt, and behaves so. First, he was only the bearer of Lucullus' message. It was inappropriate for him to make a [personal] speech [before the Armenian king]. Moreover, the custom of the court is well known, the ritual that had been practiced at the court of the King of Kings since ancient times. Anyone who wanted an interview with the King of Kings had to kneel down. When Conon the Athenian, who had arrived at the court of Artaxerxes [II], expressed a desire to speak in person with the king, the chiliarch [*hazarapet*, head of a thousand troops], the official who held the second position in the court, on which the admission was due (1), warned the Athenian that he must bow to the king if he wanted to appear in person, and it would be better, perhaps, to write to the king instead of talking with him.

If Appius wanted to be introduced to the king, he should have accorded to the king the honors that ritual and custom required, that is, to kneel before Tigranes. If he was so proud that he did not want to follow court protocol, he would not dare to see the king, especially to speak so brazenly and to observe Tigranes' confused face. One of these two situations is possible: either Appius did not see King Tigranes and did not personally deliver Lucullus' message, or if he saw him, he knelt before him. In one case, his story is merely arrogant pride, the primitive boasting of a young man eager to gain fame for himself; in the other case, his bitterness was conditioned by his experiences at Tigranes' court.

Cornelius Nepos, Conon, 3: necesse est enim, si in conspectum veneris, venerari te regem (quod προσκυνεῖν illi vocant. Compare the Armenian expression "երկիր պագաւել/erkir paganel" to bow to the ground.

Cornelius Nepos, [Conon, 3](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

[471]

According to our historian, prior to this Tigranes did not want to see his unfortunate relative, Mithridates, or even to talk with him, but had kept him in Pontus in swampy places, often harmful to the health, and treated Mithridates with contempt, like a prisoner. After the embassy of Appius, Tigranes invited Mithridates to his court, honored him and treated him in a friendly manner. In the royal palace, they had secret conversations that dispelled their mutual suspicions, unfortunately for their associates, on whom they placed the blame. Among this number was Metrodorus of Scepsis, an agreeable and knowledgeable man who was styled the "father" of King Mithridates. Mithridates sent him to his son-in-law to ask for help in the fight against the Romans. "But, you Metrodorus," asked Tigranes, "what advice do you have for me in this matter?" Metrodorus replied that as an envoy, he urged Tigranes to help, but as an advisor, to reject [involvement].

Tigranes probably reported this answer to Mithridates, who had Metrodorus murdered. However, the historian himself admits that the death of Metrodorus had been decided upon long before. Thus, Tigranes had nothing to do with his death. Nevertheless, the narrator is ready to blame the Armenian king for this, too.

Another Greek orator, Amphicrates, who had been expelled from his country, had gone to the East and was received at Tigranes' court. But the ungrateful refugee soon became a suspect, and was barred from doing business with the Greeks. [Amphicrates] committed suicide by starving himself.

It is possible that Tigranes and Mithridates had decided to raid Lycaonia and Cilicia. Lucullus was probably surprised that Tigranes, who intended to take part in the war against the Romans, did not cooperate with Mithridates during the height of his power.

The author does not miss any opportunity, right or wrong, to slander King Tigranes. The fact that Tigranes at that time did not support Mithridates in his fight against the Romans implies that he did not consider it in his interests to engage in a confrontation with the Romans. Surely he could have hosted the defeated [Mithridates], even if he were not his relative, without also acting on his behalf, without thinking that his humanitarian stance would [472] cause strife with the Romans. It was not Tigranes who started the war, but the glory-seeking Lucullus. Thus, there is no reason to rebuke Tigranes for starting the war, which was Lucullus' project. If [Tigranes] had wanted to go to war, he would not have kept Mithridates isolated in "swampy, unhealthy places" but would have invited him to work out a joint plan of war. It is also true that Tigranes—who at that time was busy with the conquest of Phoenicia—could not practically be involved in the affairs of his father-in-law.

The story about the philosopher Metrodorus is mythical. Metrodorus had long since left Mithridates' palace and was ensconced in Tigranes' own palace. Undoubtedly, he was invited by Tigranes to write the story of his achievements. Metrodorus wrote several books of this *History* (1) [(19)]. In the year 70 B.C., Metrodorus was in the service of Tigranes. How could Mithridates, who had taken refuge with Tigranes, dare to kill the royal historian in the Armenian court without provoking the displeasure of his lord, Tigranes, whose help he was begging for at the time? The [details about the] story of Metrodorus' murder must be rejected as a deliberate falsification (2).

Meanwhile, Lucullus was passing his time in "pleasures and joys" when his envoy, Appius, arrived bringing the news of Tigranes' refusal to hand over his guest. This refusal (as a moral tribute to the right to hospitality and friendship) surely cannot be seen as a cause of war [(20)]. Lucullus was accused of "seeking one war after another, not in the interests of the state, but to make his command long-term, to use public dangers to his advantage."

(1) Scholia in Apollonius Rhodius, IV. 133.

(2) Th. Reinach's hypothesis—that Metrodorus' work did not go beyond 70 B.C.—cannot be acceptable, since it is based on Metrodorus' supposed death occurring in 70 B.C. See Th. Reinach, *Mithridate Eupator roi de Pont* (Paris, 1890), pp. 428-429 [at Internet Archive].

[473]

Before launching a military campaign against Tigranes, Lucullus was well aware of the circumstances that favored him. Mithridates' son, Machares, ruler of the Bosphorus, had recently betrayed his father and crossed over to Lucullus' side, and had sent Lucullus a diadem worth a thousand gold pieces. Furthermore, Mithridates' general Dorylaeus [(21)], despite the information provided by Plutarch—which said that he was allegedly killed after the battle of Cabira—in fact was then involved in secret negotiations with the Romans (1). Mithridates also was betrayed by his cousin, Phoenix. As it happened, Mithridates had no other support in his kingdom, because the Greek cities had been destroyed, and the fortresses had been handed over to Lucullus. Prince Olthacus of the Dandarians [one of the barbarian tribes] (2), and the Scythian prince Maradone/Sabadone, had turned from Mithridates. King Ariobarzanes of Cappadocia was an ally of Lucullus.

The Roman general was acquainted with this situation in advance and succeeded in gaining allies inside the empire of Tigranes. In fact, the mission of Appius had the aim of getting Tigranes' subordinates to overthrow him. [The historian Plutarch], Lucullus' perpetual fan, is forced to admit that Lucullus had signed a secret treaty with the king of Gordyene/Korduk' through Appius' intermediation (3). Through extremely lavish promises, the Roman general pulled to his side the petty Arab kings, who were to hand over all they had to Lucullus. Similarly, all the people of Tsopk were prepared to support him.

Lucullus even extended his hand to the king of the Parthians, urging him to recall [and stay loyal to] a previous agreement signed in the year 92 B.C. against Tigranes.

Once Lucullus felt himself ready, through secret diplomacy and laying the groundwork for treachery, he prepared to launch a campaign to "go to the territory of innumerable cavalry, a land boundless, surrounded on all sides by deep rivers and snow-capped peaks." His was a bold step, which from the standpoint of caution and rationality

(1) Strabo, XII. 3. 33; Plutarchi, Lucullus, 17.

Strabo, [12. 3](#). [in English, at LacusCurtius];
Plutarch's [Lucullus, 17](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 16; Appiani Mithridatica, 79.

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 16](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].
Appian's [Mithridatica, 79](#) [in English, at Livius].

(3) *Ibid.*, 29.
Plutarch's [Lucullus, 29](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[474] might appear strange to those lacking information about his secret preparation. The invader also was relying on Tigranes' subordinates who had pledged their support.

Lucullus' route for invading Armenia is the most eloquent argument that he really hoped for a revolt by the rulers subordinate to Tigranes. Indeed, if he had wanted to attack Tigranes in his main cities, Artaxata or Tigranocerta, as his [Roman] historian asserts, he needed to take the road to Artaxata, which extended from the Lycus River via the valleys of the Euphrates to Karenitis (which is the present-day Erzerum), and from there to Araksene [Arax valley], where Artaxata was located. If his destination was Tigranocerta, he only had to descend through Cappadocia, travelling through the land of his ally Ariobarzanes, without any difficulty, following the long road to the Zeugma crossing on the Euphrates River, whence he would pass through Osroene, then to Mygdonia, and on to Tigranocerta. In either case, he would not be dealing with "snow-capped mountains."

However, he preferred the route to Melitene/Malatya, crossing the bridge at Tomisa to raid Tsopk and continuing his travels to Gordyene/Korduk, with the aim, certainly, of uniting with the rebellious King Zarbienus.

Lucullus, and those historians who praised him, were less concerned with the truth than they were with inventing foolish miracles that the commander [supposedly] encountered enroute. Here, history has been turned into mythology or poetic falsification.

When Lucullus approached the Euphrates, it was overflowing with winter rain. But what a miracle occurred there! The Euphrates River demonstrated its obedience, and suddenly returned to its bed, allowing the commander to make a quick and uneventful crossing.

This was followed by another miracle. On the other side of the Euphrates there were heifers dedicated to the goddess Artemis, that is, to Anahit. These [sacred] cows roamed freely in the meadows, having stamped on their foreheads the [goddess'] symbol, a torch. When the army crossed the Euphrates, one of the heifers climbed up to a [sacred] rock **[475]** dedicated to the goddess, where it stopped, bowed its head to Lucullus, and presented itself for sacrifice. Lucullus also sacrificed a bull to the Euphrates for his fortunate crossing.

The imagination that gave birth to this miracle was not overly creative. The same story was told about events around the city of Cyzicus, but since there were no [white] sacred heifers available for sacrifice, [a black] heifer made a solitary swim across the sea and presented itself for sacrifice.

Let us follow Lucullus' progress, telling the story from the same historian [Plutarch] who gives it an imaginary aspect.

On the second day after the crossing, and in the days that followed, Lucullus advanced through the territory of Tsopk, crossed the Tigris River, and invaded Armenia.

[Supposedly], the messenger who first informed Tigranes about Lucullus' arrival was beheaded. No one else dared to tell Tigranes the truth. Tigranes, sole ruler of much of Asia, who was in his seventies at the time—and thus, by his years certainly experienced—is portrayed by a credulous historian as a childish fool who, unconscious of the flames of war surrounding him, allowed himself to be sweet-talked and swayed by flatterers who claimed that Lucullus could have been a great general if he had dared to wait for Tigranes before [the city of] Ephesus and or had not hurriedly fled Asia, seeing his numerous troops. The narrator claims that Tigranes was "a common, ordinary person, and not every person is able to

maintain his sanity, and not be overwhelmed by great success, just as not every person is able to withstand unmixed wine." Finally, Mitrobarzanes [Meruzhan] had the courage to tell Tigranes the truth. He was immediately sent against Lucullus at the head of 3,000 cavalry and many infantry, with the order to bring the Roman general alive, and to kill others. Lucullus sent the legate Sextilius with 1,600 cavalry, and a little more infantry. Mitrobarzanes was killed in a fierce battle, and his army fled, with some of the troops being killed, others, surviving.

Tigranes then abandoned Tigranocerta, retreated to the Taurus [Mountains] and concentrated all his forces there. Wanting to stop him, Lucullus sent Murena to pursue Tigranes' concentrated troops, to inflict casualties, and he sent Sextilius to stop a large Arab army rushing to the king's aid. [476] Sextilius attacked the Arabs, and Murena attacked Tigranes in a long, narrow, hilly gorge, which was bad for a large army. Tigranes fled, leaving his baggage. After these successes, Lucullus proceeded to besiege Tigranocerta.

All this nonsense should be utterly distrusted. It is barely possible to gather some legitimate facts from it to include in a serious history. Lucullus most likely began raiding around Armenia's borders without a formal declaration of war. Tsopk was the first land he entered. The name Mitrobarzanes should be changed to Mitrobuzanes. The latter is none other than the ruler of Tsopk, probably the son of Artanes, who was named after his grandfather Mitrobuzanes, who was the patron of Ariarathes. Tigranes, who subjugated Tsopk, had not destroyed its royal dynasty. After the defeat of Artanes, he was succeeded by his son as ruler of the country, and a subordinate of Tigranes. He resisted the Roman invaders, but was overthrown and killed. Lucullus, or his historian, is uninformed about the local geography. After the crossing of the Tigris, as well as the Euphrates, Lucullus continued to be located in Tsopk, in the territory of Mitrobuzanes. This was the name given to the entire country enclosed by the western Tigris and the Arsianias rivers. The region beyond the Tigris, which was between it and Mygdonia, earlier was part of Tsopk. The place of the battle is not indicated. The historical primary sources, in general, are poorly informed about the topography of Lucullus' alleged arena of feats, which makes their information highly questionable. The accounts even preserve the name Sapi, where was located the tomb of the rhetorician Amphicrates, who died in Tigranes' court, but their authors refrained from mentioning the places that became renowned due to Lucullus' victories. Where did the general cross the Tigris to fight Mitrobarzanes? What was his military strategy after that victory? Did he go to Tigranocerta or to Gordyene to help his allies? On all these questions our sources are completely uncertain. Our information, which originates from Lucullus' own military reports, is strangely vague even in the area of the capital Tigranocerta. [477] It is important to consider all the factors about Lucullus' invasion before deciding to applaud him or participate in his triumph on the streets of Rome. It is enough to study the map of the area to challenge the praises of his flatterers.

The location of Tigranocerta has given rise to some debate. One thing is certain: it was located in Mygdonia (1). The Armenian historian [Pavstos Buzand] knows of a fortress named Bnabegh in Tsopk and calls it the royal fortress, where the treasures of the Arsacid/Arshakuni kings were kept (2). It is preserved to this day, a few kilometers distant from Mardin, and bears its former name of Bnabegh. Bnabegh was one of the forward guard stations of Tigranocerta, the capital. It would be correct, therefore, to place Tigranocerta in the village of Tel-Armen (3), near Mardin and Bnabegh [(22)].

The road from Tomisa to Tigranocerta in ancient times passed—as it does today—near Lake Tsovk, which in Turkish translation is called Golchuk, whence the Tigris River originates, and descends along this river to the plain of Mygdonia, to Tigranocerta. Thus, there is no need to cross the Tigris to go to Tigranocerta via this route. Consequently, the battle with Mitrobarzanes could have taken place in the suburbs of Kharberd, where one might also seek the residences of the kings of Tsopk, Carcathiocerta, as well as Arsamosata/Arshamashat.

Accordingly, Lucullus' military progress may be clarified. Sextilius could meet the "Arab military unit" and stop its advance, accepting that these Arabs were merely the inhabitants of Mygdonia. The local name of this region during the Arsacid/Arshakuni period was Arvastan, which means

(1) Strabonis, XVI, 1, 23
Strabo [16, 1, 23](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) [P'avstos Buzand, V, 7,
[P'awstos Buzand, 5, 7](#) [in English at Internet Archive]

compare N. Adontz, *Армения в эпоху Юстиняна [Armenia in the Period of Justinian]*, by Nicholas Adontz (St. Petersburg, 1908), [с. 31 и др.](#)
[Armenia in the Period of Justinian, chapter 2, pp. 27 ff.](#) [in English, at Internet Archive].

(3) E. Sachau, "Ueber die Lage von Tigranocerta," *Abhandl. der kgl. Akademie der Wissensch.* zu Berlin, 1880. We must reject the identification of Tigranocerta with Amida, Mayafarghin, and Sgherd. Th. Mommsen, H. Kiepert, *Hermes* IX, 1874, S. 164; C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, *Armenien einst und jetzt*, I, Berlin und Leipzig, 1910; II, Berlin und Leipzig, 1926.

[478] the land of the Arabs. Under the name of the "Arab military unit," we must understand the native population, which was attacked by the invaders.

Explaining Murena's case is more complicated. If Tigranes had retreated to the Taurus Mountains, meaning that he had crossed the Tigris River, and was making his way to Bitlis, how could Murena accomplish his mission—which supposedly ended with the pursuit of the king, wandering around in a steep valley—without approaching the Taurus, or crossing the Tigris, neither of which is mentioned?

The opposite is even less convincing. If Lucullus, according to historical evidence, had crossed the Tigris to defeat Mitrobarzanes there, he would have had to cross the right bank again to reach Tigranocerta. However, our historian, no matter how detailed he is concerning the campaign of his hero, does not talk about the second passage.

These complications do not enhance our confidence in the details of the history of Lucullus' invasion [as presented by Roman historians].

We are told that Tigranes, during his retreat, appealed to his subordinates to mobilize all the troops which would join him: "the armies of the Gordyeni, of the Medes, the Adiabeni, and their kings, even the multitude of Arabs from the Sea of Babylon, and from the Caspian Sea area a large number of Aghuans and Iberians, and from the banks of the Araxes River, a mass of barbarians [(23)] without a king."

We are supposed to be persuaded that Tigranes' rule was intolerable, and that all the subjugated peoples wanted to overthrow it. But at the same time it is asserted that Tigranes' call was answered not only by his subordinates, but even by the Arabs living "on the shores of Babylon."

Thus, Tigranes assembled a huge army, which included 20,000 archers and slingshot users, 55,000 cavalry, 17,000 of whom were armored, 15,000 [heavily armed] infantry, and finally 35,000 sappers, bridge builders, loggers, and other necessary workers. In the face of this enormous army of 260,000 men, poor Lucullus could muster only 24 cohorts, all together, *at most* 10,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry, *about* 1,000 slingers, and archers. A military unit of 6,000 men was at Murena's disposal. [479] Is it not remarkable, as is evident from the italicized words above, that the Roman general knew precisely the statistics for the staff and armaments of his enemy but not so precisely the figures for his own side?

When Lucullus left Pontus, he had 12,000 infantry at his disposal, less than 3,000 cavalry, not counting the 6,000 fighters he had left under Sornatius' command, to hold Pontus (1). Now he thinks that he has 24 cohorts or 12,000 troops (not *at most* 10,000), 3,000 cavalry, 1,000 cavalry, in addition to Murena's 6,000 soldiers. Where did he get these 6,000 additional people? Thus, it is not true that at the time he launched the campaign against Tigranes, he had 15,000 men, in addition to which he had 1,000 troops, a 6,000-strong military unit near Murena, for a total of 22,000 men. The memory of those who do not love the truth is always short.

[Lucullus and historians] have fabricated nonsense to cover up their lack of knowledge, and so that they might distort data and events from a deliberately biased position. The absurdities that accompany [the real events] do not bring honor to those who invent them without a sense of reality.

Tigranes had decided to fight. Mithridates dissuaded him from taking [military] action and suggested instead that efforts should be made to block the passage of Roman food supplies. In the presence of all his troops, gathered from all sides, Tigranes showed his impatience. Mithridates' commander [Taxiles/Taxilus] dared to oppose the king's plan, and paid for his boldness with his life. It seemed that Mithridates, out of jealousy, wanted to impede the possibility of great success. Tigranes does not want to wait for Mithridates, out of fear that he will get to share the victory. Tigranes advances with the army, "complaining to his comrades and friends that he regrets that he should be tested only by Lucullus and not by all the commanders of Rome at once" (2).

(1) [Plutarchi, Lucullus, 24.]

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 24](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) [*Ibid.*, 26]

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 26](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[480]

Tigranes crossed the Taurus and "saw the Romans encamped in front of his capital." The inhabitants of the city were preparing to applaud his behavior and threatening the besiegers, pointing to the Armenian soldiers from the height of the walls. Lucullus moved opposite Tigranes and camped on a plain along the river. His army seemed extremely small to Tigranes, and made those who wanted to please the king laugh. Some were laughing, others were casting lots to divide the [the booty taken from the] corpses. Each of the king's commanders asked Tigranes to allow him to do the whole thing alone, while Tigranes himself would be the spectator. Tigranes himself, wanting to make some humor, uttered these famous words about the Romans: "If they are come as ambassadors, they are too many; if as soldiers, too few" (1).

Tigranes spent his day joking. He was encamped on the *east* bank of the river. Lucullus directed his army to the area where the river turned to the west and was easiest to ford. It seemed to Tigranes that Lucullus' hasty march was a retreat. Addressing Taxiles, he said with a laugh. "Don't you see that the invincible Roman hoplites are taking to flight?" At that moment, Lucullus turned [his forces] toward Tigranes' camp, to cross the river. Extremely surprised, Tigranes exclaimed two or three times. "Are they coming against us?" He organized the army, taking the center for himself and deploying the king of the Adiabeni on his left, and the king of the Medes on his right.

The battle took place in 68 [69] B.C. on October 6. Tigranes' camp was located at the foot of a hill. Lucullus hastened to seize the hill with two cohorts. Reaching the top, he cried out in a loud voice: "The victory is ours." Having said this, he attacked the enemy camp. Tigranes' army, which was not expecting the Romans to attack, cried out and attempted a most shameful flight, so that Lucullus evaded Tigranes' numerous army with almost no wounded, and almost without shedding a drop of blood. His enemy lost more than 100,000 men, while Lucullus had a hundred wounded and five killed.

(1) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 27.

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 27](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[481] The Roman general thus immortalized his name as the defeater of two of the "most famous, the most powerful" kings [Mithridates and Tigranes]. Lucullus had won by employing two opposing techniques: sometimes speed and sometimes slowness.

The author of this description is undoubtedly a fabricator of falsehoods. He knows full well that the best way to hide the truth is to lose it in amusing details supplied by an unrestrained imagination.

The question rightly arises as to how the enemy could have been so well informed about what was happening in Tigranes' camp, and among his intimates. Assuming that Tigranes' supposed jokes and satirical words were indeed uttered, how could they have been known to the Romans?

Inventing facts is always easier than faithfully uncovering their reality. The river on whose banks the battle broke out is not even mentioned. Is it the Tigris? However, the account says that as soon as Tigranes crossed the Taurus Mountains, he saw the Romans camped outside Tigranocerta. So he would have had to cross the Tigris, and descend to the capital, in order to see the Romans in front of the city. But in that case, Lucullus would not need to cross the Tigris to attack Tigranes' army. Therefore, the details of the Lucullus' shift of military operations to the west bend of the river are purely imaginary, aimed at disproving the sarcastic remarks they wanted to attribute to Tigranes. Surely the author, claiming to have information about Tigranes' private conversations, would have been more or less well versed about the place where the battle took place, which is the subject of his enthusiastic story. Yet these authorities are struggling to understand where the battle took place, in front of the city of Tigranocerta or on the banks of the Tigris River.

The account of the general [Lucullus]—so meticulous in his messages about the enemy personnel, but as for his own forces, very vague, describing the figures as "at most", "approximately"—can not be particularly trustworthy. No one wants to admit that the story of Lucullus' invasion, which is based on [Lucullus'] own military communiques, is only **[482]** a self-aggrandizing vignette, not a credible description of the actual battle (1).

In the story of Lucullus, there is no need for particular discernment to distinguish the wheat from the chaff. The events may be arranged as follows: At the beginning of the summer of 69 B.C., Lucullus crossed the Euphrates River via the bridge at Tomisa. The Euphrates, although flooded by torrential rains, allowed Lucullus to cross at a shallow spot. This only means that the weather had changed with the season, that summer had followed spring, when the water level drops significantly.

Lucullus entered Tsopk and overthrew its ruler, Mitrobarzanes (instead of Mitrobuzanes). There he learned about the execution of his secret ally, King Zarbienus of Gordyene. Tigranes, informed of the latter's betrayal, punished the king by sentencing him to death together with his entire family.

This news changed the initial plan of Lucullus, who was hoping to rely on Gordyene during his actions against Tigranes. At that time [Lucullus] was on his way to the capital Tigranocerta, which was in Arvastian, "in the land of the Arabs" (Sextilius attacked the Arabs found with Tigranes and stopped their advance) without crossing the Tigris. The city, in his opinion, was such that it could be attacked without difficulty. It was located outside the borders of Armenia itself, and its mixed population, which belonged to different tribes, had been forcibly resettled there from other places. On October 6 of the same year, we see him camped near Tigranocerta. There is no need to boast about any rapid advance to the city, as Lucullus' admiring biographer has it.

The southern borders of Tigranes' state were secured by people loyal to him. Tigranocerta was under the command of Mancaeus, Nisibis/Mtsbin was under the king's brother Gouras, and all of Syria/Assyria was under the subking Bagadat [Bagarat] (not Magadates). The latter was probably

(1) The reference is illegible.

[483] a forefather of the famous [Bagratid] family. Mankayos, corrected to "Mamankayos," was a probable ancestor of the famous Mamikonian family. There is no need to trust the information that Tigranes was in Tigranocerta at the time of Lucullus' invasion. The embassy of Appius presented itself to Tigranes in Antioch in 70 B.C. In the summer of 69 when Lucullus appeared, Tigranes was probably at his summer residence in Artaxata, where he could have gone after settling affairs in Phoenicia.

It was in Artaxata, too, that Tigranes might have encountered Mithridates, who had been waiting for him in a "swampy, unhealthy place."

This place [where Mithridates was waiting] must have been the city of Karin, the future Theodosiopolis. It is a location near Pontus, the kingdom of Mithridates, and is surrounded by swamps.

Upon receiving the news of Lucullus' invasion, the Armenian king left Artaxata to move toward the enemy. After crossing the Taurus via the gorge of Bitlis, Tigranes had to head for the city of Amida, to attack the enemy—which had advanced to Tigranacerta—from the rear, to force them to lift the siege.

Tigranes' arrival complicated Lucullus' situation. He convened a military council. Some suggested lifting the siege and going toward Tigranes. Others urged him not to leave so many enemies in the rear and insisted that the siege should continue.

The Roman general stated that each counsel by itself was bad, but both together were good.

Instructing Murena to continue the siege with 6,000 infantry, Lucullus took the rest of the army and moved against Tigranes. He camped "in a vast plain along the river." Tigranes had camped "on the east bank of the river."

Not one of the four historians (1) who narrate these events in such elaborate detail, mentions the name of this river, which indicates that their

(1) Plutarch, Appian, Memnon and Frontinus.

[484] histories all derive from the same source, Lucullus' own fraudulent communiques.

Modern [investigators] have assumed that the battle was unleashed in front of Tigranocerta, as Plutarch mentions that the besieged had greeted Tigranes' arrival; the river dividing the two camps was the Nikeporion. This can not be so. Were it the

case, there would have been no need to meet to discuss whether or not the siege should be lifted.

The battle, without doubt, took place by the banks of the Tigris River, but precisely where is not clear. We are informed that the Armenian camp was located on the east bank of the river. The Tigris flows from north to south. Its direction is as follows: from its source to Amida and beyond, to where it merges with the Bohtan. Thus, for the site of the battle, we must choose between the bank of the Tigris near Amida, or the bank between the confluence the two Tigris Rivers. [T.] Mommsen and also T. Reinach made the latter selection. We prefer the former, and consider that the battle was fought near Amida. If Lucullus were obliged to leave Tigranocerta, his main worry would have been that Tigranes could cut off his retreat. In the event of his defeat, the Roman army would have to retreat via the Amida-Melitene road. Consequently, it was necessary to think about the security of that road. If Tigranes had come from the direction of the Bohtan, it would not have been a threat to the Romans' position, and Lucullus would have remained where he was. If he considered it necessary to retreat from Tigranocerta, it would have been done to prevent Tigranes from crossing the Amida-Melitene road [and blocking it]. Tigranes apparently travelled the Bitlis-Martyropolis route, and at the end camped on the east bank of the Tigris, in the suburbs of Amida.

The description of the battle also is far from clear. It was described by Plutarch, Appian (1), Memnon [of Heraclea] (2), and Frontinus (3), but their information is ultimately based on Lucullus' communiques. The latter deliberately exaggerated

(1) Appiani Mithridates, 8
Appian's [Mithridates, 8](#) [bilingual, at Internet Archive].

(2) Memnon, 57 [? 37].
[Memnon, \[38 ff.\]](#) [at Attalus].

(3) Frontini II, 2, 4.

[485] Tigranes' forces, claiming that the Armenian king had brought out against Lucullus an army of 250,000 men, and that he had lost 100,000 on the battlefield. According to Memnon [of Heraclea], there were 250,000 infantry and 50,000 cavalry, Eutropius has 100,000 cavalry and 7,500 mail-clad soldiers. According to Titus Livius, one Roman soldier had to contend with twenty of the enemy.

All these figures are imaginary, as are the untrustworthy detailed descriptions of the battle. The Romans had almost no information about Armenia or the Armenians. Lucullus, not afraid of being exposed, thought that he could satisfy his arrogance by giving free reign to his unfettered imagination.

Here is what [the descriptions] say. Lucullus crossed the river and was the first to move against the enemy. The Armenian mail-clad cavalry, on which the Armenians greatly relied, was at the foot of a hill. Lucullus ordered his Thracian and Galatian cavalry to advance, and to strike from the side at the spearmen of the Armenian cavalry and "throw back the spearmen of the Armenian cavalry with their swords." He personally took two cohorts of two thousand men and hurried to capture the hill. Reaching the top of the hill, he shouted out loudly. "The day is ours, the day is ours, my fellow soldiers!"

After uttering these magic words, the Roman general attacked the armored cavalry. Let us not forget that its number was supposed to reach 50,000. Lucullus ordered his own men to strike at the legs and thighs of their opponents, the only parts of the body that were not protected by armor. But to whom was this advice offered? There was no need to apply it, "because the opponents with loud cries and in most disgraceful flight, hurled themselves and their horses, with all their weight, upon the ranks of their own infantry, before it had so much as begun to fight, and so all those tens of thousands were defeated without the infliction of a wound or the sight of blood."

Is it possible that on a hill, "the approach to which was no more than four *stadia*", that is, seven hundred and twenty meters, a huge army of 250,000 men, encamped at the foot, did not notice that the enemy was trying to capture the hill? Is it believable that a 2,000-strong military unit could put to flight such a huge army, which included 50,000 mail-clad troops?

[486]

It would be naïve to trust such nonsense. Either Tigranes' army was not as strong as described, or the account itself is completely distorted. We think that both proposals are mistaken.

Plutarch has concealed a fact of great importance [found in other sources (Memnon and Appian)]. Tigranes, before his encounter with Lucullus, had sent a 6,000-strong contingent to Tigranocerta during the Roman siege, which managed to break through the lines, pushing the besiegers aside in a rain of arrows. They entered the city, and, after securing Tigranes' women and treasures, departed on the next day, again breaking through the Roman line, and going to Tigranes (1).

This incident gives rise to some reflections. First, it testifies to the fact that Tigranes was not in Tigranocerta at the time of Lucullus' invasion, as Plutarch claims, when he implied that Tigranes was still in the capital and abandoned it. Had that been the case, the king would have taken his wives and treasures along with him. Moreover, if Tigranes had an army of even 80,000 troops at his disposal—which is the smallest figure, provided by Memnon—he might have sent more than 6,000 men on such a dangerous mission.

Finally, if an agile military unit of 6,000 men had been able to carry out such a courageous act, why should the main forces of the same army have fled from the enemy without even daring to engage in battle? This is indeed a mystery whose solution should be sought from [the accounts of] Lucullus and his self-serving historians.

The story of Tigranes' royal diadem alone is enough to discredit everything that [these historians] say about Lucullus and Tigranes. To account for the presence of Tigranes' supposed diadem among Lucullus' booty, they invented a rather flat, simplistic story. Supposedly, Tigranes, at the outset, forced to flee from the battlefield with his own people, removed the diadem from his head and, weeping, handed it over to his son, telling him to save it as best he could. The young man who did not dare

(1) Memnon, 56 [? 38]; Appiani, 85.

[Memnon, 38](#) [bilingual, at Attalus];
Appian's [Mithradatica 85](#) [bilingual, at Internet Archive].

[487] to put the diadem on his head, gave it to one of his servants to keep. As it happened, the latter was taken prisoner. In this way, Lucullus became the owner of the diadem (1).

To those who enjoy dramatic tragedy, an excellent scene now presents itself. First, Mithridates, was in no hurry to arrive for the battle, assuming that Lucullus was going to move at his usual slow speed. However, when he learned about Tigranes' defeat, he started searching for Tigranes, and found him in a pitiful condition, abandoned by everyone. Mithridates then dismounted, weeping with Tigranes over the general misfortune, and gave him his own royal equipage to inspire hope for the future.

Where does this bitterness, this unmerciful anger that inspires such unflattering portrayals of Tigranes come from? If Lucullus had defeated the Armenian king, he, like all victors, would not have needed to be so angry with his defeated opponent.

There are some things here that are beyond our comprehension. The bitterness may arise from [the historians] having concealed some things. Did Tigranes cause the Roman general any trouble?

It seems to me that the exaggeration of Tigranes' [military] forces should be taken in the very opposite sense, that is, at the time of the military confrontation with Lucullus, Tigranes did not have a large military force. In order to present his own success in a more favorable light, Lucullus probably exaggerated the number of troops he was destined to fight.

The Eastern empires did not have a [permanent] regular army, as the troops were always at war. The kings of Persia had only one military unit at their disposal, called the "immortals", consisting of guards, [this was] the only detachment of troops that was always ready to serve them. The commander of this military unit was called *hazarapati*, the chief of a thousand men, or chiliarch. The Achaemenids, the Parthians, and the Sasanians all had such an official, as did the Armenian Arshakunis.

Plutarchi, Lucullus, 28.
Plutarch's [Lucullus, 28](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[488] The military unit of the immortals [*anmah*] was called *matean gund* in Armenian, which is undoubtedly a loan word from Parthian.

Tigranes left Artaxata accompanied by his 10,000-strong guard. If the kings of the Medes/Mars and Adiabenis had come to reunite with him, as Plutarch asserts, their guard could not have exceeded 10,000 men. Together with Tigranes' guard, [the Armenians] might have had 20,000 soldiers. One may add in the military detachments of some Armenian princes attached to the court. Lucullus was destined to face an army that in no way included many myriads of troops. With a sense of reality, Memnon found it necessary to reduce the incredible number of 250,000 reported by Lucullus to 80,000, that is, by one third. For the same reason, it is possible to reduce the number reported by Memnon.

One group, consisting of 6,000 men, had left for a special mission. Tigranes' army could not have been much larger than his opponent's army [(24)].

It appears that Lucullus attacked Tigranes unexpectedly, gaining the advantage, probably, by successful military tactics. His victory, however, was not overwhelming (1). Tigranes' retreat was not a desperate escape, as [Lucullus] himself or his historian [Plutarch] attest. If that were the case, it would be difficult to understand why the victorious army did not then encircle the fleeing army from a closer distance to enter Armenia and end their catastrophe in one fell swoop. What could be easier than to pursue people who "fled in fear and terror?" In that case, he could have gained the advantage using the speed with which he was so vainly proud to defeat "the most famous, the most powerful King Tigranes."

Instead of following in the footsteps of the loser, Lucullus allowed him to retreat calmly, to return, to prepare to expel the winner. Lucullus preferred to return to Tigranocerta. If we want to know about this commander, we must judge him according to

(1) Titus Livius, Orosius, and Frontinus believe that Mithridates participated in this battle.

[489] his actions, not his words. Everything said about Lucullus' first encounter with Tigranes should be treated with great caution, if not completely dismissed as boasting.

Tigranocerta was full of [mercenary] Greek soldiers determined to betray Tigranes. The governor of the city, Mankayos, an ancestor of the Mamikonians, was able to disarm them. However, that precaution already came too late. Mankayos wanted to put them to the sword when it became known that the zone entrusted to their guard had already been handed over to their enemies. Lucullus entered Tigranocerta with the gates wide open. He did not need to attack the city anymore, as Plutarch confirms; it was captured at the cost of betrayal.

Lucullus plundered the royal treasures there and handed the city over to his soldiers for plundering. He personally looted 8,000 talents (8000 x 6000 = 48 million francs) and, in addition, each soldier received 800 drachmas, which is almost 15 million francs for 18,000 soldiers.

Lucullus repatriated to their homelands the Greeks and other barbarians whom [Tigranes] had forced to come and settle in his new capital. They were even supplied with funds for the trip. "Thus, the destruction of one city allowed many cities to be reborn," says [Plutarch], Lucullus' historian, and Plutarch does not hesitate to characterize him as a benefactor and founder. Yet an impartial, more rational, observer might have blamed the commander for this monstrous destruction and devastation.

Tigranes had invited a large number of actors to the grand opening of the theater he had built [in the capital]. Lucullus made use of them to celebrate his victory through games and performances.

Intoxicated by his transitory success, Lucullus dreamed of matching strength with the king of the Parthians, hoping to boast that in the course of just one campaign he had defeated three kings, one after the other.

After [representatives of] the Arabs, [representative of] the [people of] Tsopk, and the [people of] Gordyene had come to declare their submission, a delegation arrived from the king of the Parthians, asking the Romans for **[490]** a treaty of friendship. Lucullus responded positively by sending a delegation to the Parthians.

However, it turned out that the king of the Parthians had at the same time "modestly" asked Tigranes for Mesopotamia, in exchange for his alliance.

It was then that Lucullus decided to go against the Parthians in order to win "the laurels of the victor over the three most powerful kings who ever lived."

However, the ambitious commander was not destined to carry out this "modest" aspiration. The troops refused to follow him. The soldiers, who had grown rich, only wanted to have the opportunity to enjoy their booty in safety and leisure. Not even the honor of the Roman legionaries was willing to save Lucullus' reputation.

If wealth could make soldiers indifferent to military action, Lucullus would have been its first victim. Accumulating innumerable treasures, he was probably the most interested of all in recreation, in order to enjoy his wealth. It would not be right for him to blame the soldiers for that, or to chastise them about it. We shall see how the same soldiers united under the banner of Pompey.

In fact, the [failure of the] ambitious plan against the Parthians did not discompose Lucullus. He had tried to get an alliance of the Parthian king in order to direct him against Tigranes. He failed in this, and was forced to go against Tigranes alone again.

The battle on the banks of the Tigris River took place on October 6, in 69 B.C. Lucullus spent the winter in Tigranocerta, where celebrations of his real or supposed victory were held.

In the middle of summer, in 68 B.C., he crossed the Taurus and encamped on the banks of the Arsianias River. Historians' information about this campaign is as vague as about the first one. There is no doubt that they could have been any better informed [in this case] about what truly happened this time, despite the many superfluous details that fill their accounts. The fields at the foot of the Taurus were still green due to the cold weather. Lucullus descended to the plains, was unsuccessfully attacked by the Armenians [491], freely looted the villages, plundered the wheat supplies intended for Tigranes, and tried to starve the enemy.

After acknowledging that the Armenians had dared to attack him, and that Lucullus had repulsed their repeated attacks, [historians] assert—without worrying about the contradictions—that Lucullus had incited them to battle, but that he had failed to draw the "repeatedly defeated" Armenian troops out of their inaction.

So Lucullus left, taking the road to Artaxata, Tigranes' royal residence, to fight him there. The Roman general was on his way to Artaxata when Tigranes, at the head of his army, arrived in the course of four days to "camp before the Romans." This time also the hostile camps were divided by the Arsianias River that flowed between them. To reach Artaxata, Lucullus had to cross this river. His twelve cohorts in the front line, "one after the other" crossed the Arsianias. There on the other side were drawn up Tigranes' select troops and numerous cavalry, as well as the Mardian mounted archers and Iberian lancers, on whom the king especially depended. However, this foreign army did not justify the king's trust. After a light skirmish with the Roman cavalry, the Mardians and the Iberians turned tail and fled. At that time, Tigranes' cavalry, which was awesome in its splendor and size, was advancing. The king commanded his best soldiers, those from Sakacene. Lucullus recalled his horsemen who were in pursuit [of the Mars and Ibers] and moved with them against Tigranes. The latter was so terrified that he fled before any encounter.

[The historians] add that "of the three kings who took part in the battle, the most shameful flight was that of Mithridates, the king of Pontus, who could not stand even the shouts of the Romans."

It was merely left to the winner to pursue the fleeing army, killing, capturing, and taking booty. They did that all night.

The aftermath now, however, was as unhappy as it was during the first battle. Encouraged by his victory, Lucullus planned to advance farther and to crush the enemy completely. This time, however, he was hindered by the sudden onset of severe cold, even though [492] it was the period of the autumnal equinox [September]. The horses could not drink water from the icy rivers nor could they cross the rivers, because the ice would suddenly break, severing the tendons of the horses' legs with its jagged edges. The soldiers were forced to walk in the snow over snowy routes, which eventually prompted them to revolt. They revolted a few days after the [recently successful] battle. Lucullus pleaded with them to be patient until they could destroy the Armenian Carthage, [the city of] Artaxata. But his pleas were in vain. The general bitterly took them back, crossing the Taurus via a different pass and descended to Mygdonia, where the great city of Nisibis/Mtsbin was located, a city that the Greeks called the Antioch of Mygdonia.

This story, which undoubtedly derives from Lucullus and bears the stamp of the immodesty typical of him, contains some highly suspicious details that cannot be covered up. The route is not at all clear. The location of this battle, also, seems as

uncertain as the first battle. While it is true that to go from Tigranocerta to Artaxata/Artashat, one must cross the Taurus, was there a need to cross the Arsanius River too? If the encounter with Tigranes had taken place, as modern [researchers] believe, near Manazkert, Lucullus would not have needed to cross the river to start a battle. The road that stretched from the Mush plain (where Lucullus was located after descending from the Taurus Mountains) to Artaxata, went via the Manazkert-Diadin route. To reach Artaxata, Lucullus merely had to follow it in this direction, without crossing the Arsanius. The same applies to Tigranes. If he had descended from Artaxata to Manazkert, he would have been on the same shore of the river as Lucullus.

However, we are informed [by historians] that the two camps were separated by a river. For this reason, we must accept the fact that Lucullus had advanced as far as the border of Bagrevand (modern Alashkert) and encamped on the southern shore of the eastern branch of the Arsanius River, near present-day Uch-Kilise [Bagavan].

In four days, Tigranes arrived from Artaxata and could have camped on the opposite shore. His route passed through the Ararat mountain range, along the Igdir-Artsap line, the only one that connected the Araxes and Arsanius valleys. Of course, it is impossible for an army to go from Manazkert to Artaxata [493] in four days. It could barely reach the Bagrevand plain in that time.

Furthermore, it is not credible that Lucullus could have advanced so far and fast that he reached Artaxata. The inaccurate information we receive about the weather at that time in Armenia can shake our faith in the reliability of the rest of the information. The period of the autumnal equinox, September, coincides with one of the best seasons in Armenia, and contradicts everything that our source reports. In any case, even in the event of increasing coldness at that time of year, it would not be possible to encounter frozen rivers, freezing people or snow-covered trails in Armenia.

To justify his retreat—the real cause of which still must be determined—the Roman general found it expedient to blame bad weather and (because of it), the disobedience of his troops.

If we do not want to condemn our author for making such a serious error, we must consider the possibility that Lucullus may have had an encounter with the Armenians not in Bagrevand, but somewhere else, in the mountains, where the weather is harsher, much colder than in the plains. These mountains could only be the Bingol range (Strabo's Abus). Accepting this hypothesis, Lucullus' invasion presents itself in a different light. His intention was not to go to Artaxata, but to go to Pontus via Armenia, to his general Sornatius. In this case, after descending over the Taurus to the Mush plain, he needed to cross the Arsanius, make his way through the Bingol mountains to the region of Karenitis (modern Erzurum), and from there to Pontus. It is only this way that the reference to crossing a river, and the bad weather can be considered justified.

The battle in question could have been fought on the other side of the [Arsanius] River, on the slope of the mountains. It seems more likely that Lucullus lost, rather than won, this battle—which could be the real reason for his retreat. It would be right to distrust this supposed victory by which three kings, Tigranes [494], the king of the Mardians [also named] Mithridates, and Mithridates [VI, Eupator] king of Pontus took to their heels, with Mithridates of Pontus being the first and most shameful deserter (1).

It is especially noteworthy that Lucullus, when returning to Mesopotamia, was forced to choose a different route. The road, which stretches from the Arsanius valley over the Taurus mountains to Mygdonia, passes through the Bitlis gorge. Consequently, Lucullus took a different route to enter the Arsanius valley. That would have to be either the Amida-Balu, or the Amida-Martyropolis-Sasun route, which is not far from the Bitlis gorge (2).

Having returned to Mesopotamia, Lucullus stopped in the land of Gordyene, whose king, Zarbienen, had been put to death along with his entire family for betraying his lord, Tigranes. Lucullus commemorated the death of this ally of his with a lavish funeral and built him a more splendid mausoleum. It is probable that Lucullus had altered his route to the Mesopotamian plains in order to be with a friendly people. However, the friendly reception did not prevent Lucullus from looting Zarbienen's mansion, robbing its treasures and taking the 300,000 medims of wheat which were stored there.

The final act in Lucullus' triumph was the capture of Nisibis/Mtsbin. After reestablishing his forces in Gordyene, the Roman general advanced to besiege Nisibis. This city was under the command of Gouras, Tigranes' brother. The defense of the city was entrusted to the architect Callimachus, who had created great obstacles for Lucullus during the siege of Amisus. The garrison bravely repulsed the attacks of the Romans, but due to the bad weather at that time of year it had become less alert. One stormy night, Lucullus attacked and seized the city (3).

(1) According to Phlegon of Tralles (fr. 6) Tigranes' casualties reached the figure of 5,000 men. (C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum*, Paris, 1883, t. III, p. 606). It is interesting that Appian does not mention Artaxata in this connection, and speaks only about the cavalry here (*Mithridatica*, 37). To Dio the site of the battle is unclear (36, 7). Everything supports the view that Plutarch has exaggerated the significance of the expedition.

(2) According to Sextus Rufus, Lucullus returned via Melitene.

(3) The seizure is mentioned in Eusebius (*Chronicon*, v. II, 135, ed. A. Shoene, Berlin, 1875).

[495]

From this point on, Lucullus' [successful military] career came to an end. Good fortune turned away from him once and for all. The army refused to follow him, a very peculiar circumstance. A victorious army will never give up on its commander if he has really furthered their military exploits. What was even worse was the fact that even in Rome people were dissatisfied with Lucullus. He was accused of abusing his position as commander, of prolonging the war for profit, of plundering Tigranes' royal residences, "as if he had been sent there to plunder the kings, and not to fight against them."

To explain this turn of fortune, Lucullus' [sympathetic] historian states: "As for the soldiers' hostility, it was due to his bad temper." After lavishing so much praise on Lucullus' "good, very enlightened soul," [Plutarch] is forced to admit that the general did not have a mild disposition, that "he treated everyone with contempt, and regarded others as nothing compared to himself." When Lucullus described Tigranes' love of luxury, arrogance, and greed, he was actually sketching his own portrait.

Hatred for Lucullus was [almost] universal. Even his nephew, Publius Claudius [(25)], who was probably in Lucullus' army at the time and was dissatisfied with his own position, began to provoke the troops to intensify their disobedience toward Lucullus. This young man, like his sister (who was Lucullus' wife), had bad habits. The wife was accused of having improper relationships with her own brothers. The general's mother likewise had a bad reputation. The dissatisfaction of the soldiers was so great that they threw their empty purses in front of Lucullus, telling him that he should fight by himself against the enemies, whose wealth he had usurped for himself alone.

According to Lucullus' seemingly convincing messages, Rome believed that Tigranes and Mithridates had been completely crushed, when news was received that the two kings had not been defeated at all but instead had invaded Cappadocia and Pontus. Lucullus was immediately ordered to hand over his commission to Pompey, who [496] would be succeeding him. Waiting for Pompey, Lucullus camped in Gordyene in 68-67 B.C., spending the winter there.

The battle at the Arsianias River did not have as favorable consequences for Lucullus as is portrayed, and the events unfolded in a completely different manner. This can be judged from the fact that Tigranes and Mithridates immediately launched attacks and began raiding, one in Lesser Armenia and Pontus, the other in Tsopk.

Mithridates crossed the Euphrates at the head of an Armenian military unit of 8,000 men. The population welcomed him with joy. Outraged by foreign rule, it rebelled and massacred the Romans who were scattered throughout the land. The first battle took place near Cabira, the second near Gaziura. Roman generals Fabius and Triarius were defeated and lost 7,000 soldiers, 24 military tribunes, and 150 centurions.

Shortly afterwards, Tigranes, with his son-in-law Mithridates (the king of Media), appeared in Cappadocia and immediately ousted King Ariobarzanes.

As soon as Lucullus, who had camped in Gordyene under the pretext of winter, heard about Mithridates [Eupator's] preparations to fight Sornatius and Triarius, he set out for Pontus to help them. But before the arrival of Lucullus, Triarius, who was "eager to win the victory," fought and was defeated in Gaziura.

Lucullus arrived a few days later. Mithridates did not want to fight at that point. He was awaiting the arrival of Tigranes, who was coming with a large army.

Lucullus decided to go in advance of Tigranes and stop him from joining Mithridates. However, the troops refused to follow him. The commander could only wait for the arrival of his successor, Pompey, and hand over his authority to him. The

meeting of the two commanders took place in a village in Galatia. They parted from each other with more enmity than before. Lucullus' military proceedings

(1) Plutarchi, Lucullus, 33. Plutarch's [Lucullus, 33](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

What Plutarch narrates about Lucullus' visit to Gordyene ([in chapter 23](#)) does not relate to the winter of 69-68 B.C., but later, to the winter of 68-67, when Lucullus entered Gordyene after the capture of Nisibis, and not after the battle at Tigranocerta.

[497] had been declared invalid. Pompey took Lucullus' troops and left him only 1,600 soldiers for his [subsequent] triumphal parade [in Rome].

The deflated Lucullus headed back to Rome. After that he abandoned political life and retired to his luxurious mansions where he lived like a newly-rich man, wasting the innumerable riches he had plundered during his invasions. The Stoic Tiberius was right when he called Lucullus "Xerxes in a toga."

In the biography of Lucullus, as its narrator [Plutarch] is compelled to acknowledge, "as in an ancient comedy, one reads in the first part of political measures and military commands, and in the latter part of drinking bouts, and banquets, and what might pass for revel-routs, and torch-races, and all manner of frivolity. For I must count as frivolity his costly edifices, his ambulatories and baths, and still more his paintings and statues (not to speak of his devotion to these arts), which he collected at enormous outlays, pouring out into such channels the vast and splendid wealth which he accumulated from his campaigns." Before his death, Lucullus lost his mental faculties, leaving behind nothing more substantial than the adjective "Lucullan" to describe ostentatious feasting. Such was the sad end of the supposed conqueror of the three most powerful kings of the East.

Pompey came forth upon the stage, chiding his predecessor, and was obliged to wage war against the glorious fame of two of the supposedly vanquished kings, whose actual powers still had yet to be battled against. Lucullus, on the other hand, believed that Pompey had come to fight against ghosts, like carrion-eating birds pouncing on the corpses of those killed by others.

Indisputably, the illusion of Lucullus' supposed achievement dissipated like mist. The Roman eagles [symbols of the Roman legions] were forced to retreat across the Euphrates, and to return to their starting positions.

In the spring of 66 B.C., Pompey assumed command of the army. More clever than Lucullus, Pompey first sought to divide the enemy camp by the Roman method of *divide et impera* [(26)].

He offered Mithridates peace, undoubtedly to drive him from Tigranes. At the same time, he sent an embassy to the Parthian king Phraates/Hrahat [III] (70-57 B.C.), offering to form an alliance with him, promising him the Euphrates as a border. This promise was intended solely to isolate Tigranes. In his turn, Mithridates of Pontus, not believing that he could inspire Tigranes with a desire for

(1) Plutarchi, Pompeios, 31.

Plutarch's [Lucullus, 31](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

new **[498]** adventures, also was seeking the support of the Parthians. Phraates conducted himself rather naively, confident of the promises of the Roman general, and he declined the friendship of Mithridates of Pontus. The latter, disappointed, entered into negotiations with Pompey, but no results were achieved. Pompey felt himself in control of the situation and marched against the king of Pontus.

Mithridates' army consisted of 30,000 infantry, with two or three thousand cavalry. At the disposal of Pompey was a force twice that size. Starting a battle at this point would have been dangerous for Mithridates. Instead, he thought it wise to retreat to the Armenian border through the Lycus [Wolf River] valley. At the place where Nicopolis would rise subsequently, a battle took place, during which Mithridates suffered his first defeat (1).

He continued his retreat and encamped near Dasthyra (presentday, Dastol, between Kamakh and Ani) and not at Nicopolis, as T. Reinach believes (2). Pompey followed Mithridates and besieged him for 45 days. At that point, Mithridates escaped unnoticed and retreated for two days. On the third day, the Romans attacked him and killed 10,000 troops. Mithridates

barely escaped from the battlefield with his 800 bodyguards and managed to stop at Sinoria [the castle] where his treasures and expensive equipage were located. Then, for the third time, he headed to Armenia.

Tigranes was absolutely right in refusing asylum to the great adventurer who was the main reason for his own failure. According to rumors, Tigranes even promised a reward of 100 talents to whomever could bring him Mithridates' head. The latter was forced to escape, fleeing to Colchis.

Pompey, free from such a stubborn enemy, headed for Armenia, via the Erzinka-Erzurum road. As he entered the Araxes Valley, he encountered Tigranes' son, Tigranes the Younger. This encounter, of course, took place in Basen, Strabo's Pasiane,

(1) [The reference is missing in the manuscript.]

(2) Th. Reinach, *op. cit.*, p. 385.

[499], a district located near the upper reaches of the Araxes River. It is said that Tigranes the Younger led the Roman army to Artaxata.

It is surprising to place the Armenian prince in so reproachful a role, without being sufficiently informed of its motives. Historians unanimously portray him as a person inclined to treason, who betrays for pleasure, and who acts only on behalf of his father's enemies and the enemies of his country, standing at the side of his father-in-law [(27)] or grandfather [(28)], and finally the Romans, always against his father.

[The pro-Lucullan historians] try to convince us that the treasonous prince, unhappy because of his subordinate status, had no motive other than his lust for power. This is an arbitrary and confused explanation. Seventy-year-old Tigranes, who was already close to the grave, could not so antagonize his impatient heir to turn him to violence to shorten his days. On another occasion, Pompey rightly noted that Tigranes the Younger was "much closer to his father than to his father-in-law." Why, then, should he have betrayed his father for someone else's advantage?

The unfortunate end of the alleged traitor, who was to adorn Pompey's victory [parade]—a victory to which he is said to have contributed to—proves that there is no need to accept anything that is said about Tigranes the Younger without a critical examination.

Speaking of Tigranes [the Great]'s family tragedy, historians do not mention his son Artavasdes, who succeeded him. They know about Tigranes the Younger, and about another son whose name has not been preserved. According to their story, one day, accompanied by his two sons, Tigranes went hunting, but it happened that he fell from his horse and was injured. While Tigranes the Younger stayed with his father, and properly cared for him according to his filial duty, the other son, believing that the father was already dead, hurried to seize the royal throne. As soon as the king regained consciousness, his careless son was sentenced to death, while Tigranes [the Younger] was proclaimed heir to the throne.

(1) Plutarchi, Pompeius, 33.

Plutarch's [Pompey, 33](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[500]

Another completely fortuitous piece of information tells us about the existence of a son of Tigranes, named Zariaster (a distortion of Zariades/Zareh). The latter, with several relatives, had conspired against his father; all the conspirators had taken an oath, sealing it by drinking blood taken from their right hands (1). It seems that the anonymous son, sentenced to death by his father's order, was this Zariadres himself. The conspirators could have killed the king during the hunt, probably taking advantage of an accident that befell the king when he fell from his horse.

Thus, Tigranes had three sons, Zariadres, Tigranes and Artavasdes. The present situation does not yet concern the latter, the future heir to the throne. Since Zariadres had died, only Tigranes [the Younger] was left, who was recognized by his father as the heir to the throne. After presenting the old king's son as such an affectionate person, it is absurd [for the Roman historians] to implicate him in treasonous or other criminal conspiracies.

[According to some Roman historians,] when Tigranes [the Great] advanced after the expulsion of Lucullus and began to invade Cappadocia, his son, Tigranes, rebelled against his father. Tigranes returned from the invasion planning to punish this son, but he, along with his accomplices, escaped his father's wrath by fleeing to the Parthian king Phraates, whose daughter was his wife. Phraates launched a campaign against Tigranes with the urging of his son-in-law. The Armenian king retreated to the mountains, crushed by the Parthian troops. Artaxata/Artashat was besieged, but Phraates left without capturing the city. Tigranes [the Great] returned. His son Tigranes was forced to seek refuge with Mithridates [of Pontus], but Mithridates himself was a refugee who had been deported to the far side of Colchis. It was then [that Tigranes the Younger] decided to go to Pompey to escort him to Artaxata.

Historians are always ready to present the course of these events as due to internal divisions in an Eastern court, and to dishonest motives. Since we do not share

(1) Valerius Maximus, IX. 11, extern. 3. "Cum Sariaster adversus patrem suum Tigranen, Armeniae regem ita cum amicis consenserit, ut omnes dexteris manibus sanguinem mitterent, atque eum invicem sorberent." See also the Persian expression *sevgand xwordan*, from which derives the Armenian expression *erdumn utele* " [to eat an oath]."

[501] these negative viewpoints, and think that [more noble intentions such as] honesty and a sense of duty were not reserved solely for Roman generals, we must look for a more serious, convincing motive for the position of the Armenian prince.

Apparently there was a faction in Tigranes' court which did not approve of the king's military operations in Cappadocia, viewing them as dangerous new adventures. The king's son probably was the leader of this group. As the son-in-law of the Parthian king, he also knew what was happening in the Parthian court, and that Pompey had bribed King Phraates. Armenia was in a crisis situation. The Parthians had invaded Armenia not with the aim of elevating Prince Tigranes to the throne, but on the basis of a secret treaty with Pompey. Tigranes the Younger was powerless to stop Phraates' army, but Artaxata had not been captured yet. This task was assigned to Tigranes [the Younger], which means that the Armenian prince had been charged with some responsibilities for the fate of the capital, saving it from possible invasion by the Parthian army.

Before that, after resolving the issues with Mithridates [of Pontus], the Roman legions appeared on the border of Armenia. As soon as the Roman general sets foot on Armenian soil, the historians turn into poets. They make the sort of comments that resemble their fantasies about Lucullus.

We are assured that Pompey entered Armenia not on his own initiative, but because he was summoned by Tigranes the Younger, who then led him on to the city of Artaxata. Fifteen miles from the capital, accompanied by his relatives, Tigranes [the Great] went to surrender to Pompey, having been informed that the general was generous and a gentle person.

On his arrival at the Roman camp, two [of Pompey]'s lictors approached the king and ordered him to dismount and to enter the camp on foot. Tigranes obeyed, took off his sword, and gave it to the bodyguards. By the time he reached Pompey, Tigranes had removed his diadem, put it by the general's feet, knelt down and wanted to embrace his knees in supplication.

Pompey took him by the hand, seated him next to him, and placed his son on his other side, saying that he was leaving to the king all that he had **[502]** before his arrival, but that he would not return Syria, Phoenicia, Gordyene, and Tsopk which Lucullus had captured.

Pompey also demanded that Tigranes pay the Romans 6,000 talents in compensation for the damage he had done to them. In addition, his son was to reign in Tsopk.

Only under these conditions would the Romans be ready to acknowledge him as king. Tigranes agreed to everything that the generous commander had imposed on him. In addition, Tigranes gifted to each soldier half a *mina* of silver, to each hundreder, 10 *minas*, and to each tribune, a talent. It is added that Tigranes' son [Tigranes the Younger], Pompey's supposed ally, was very unhappy when he was invited to a dinner party and replied that he did not need such honors from Pompey and that he would find another Roman.

Pompey was indignant and threw him into jail for his victory parade. The king of the Parthians, Phraates, intervened to demand the release of the young man who was his son-in-law. He also reminded Pompey of his promise to limit his achievements to other side of the Euphrates. The victorious commander replied that his borders would be those that would be considered fair.

It is self-evident that this poetic story might bring honor to an moralising author, but not to a soberly objective historian. This story, told by historians, ultimately leads back to Pompey himself. As the worthy successor of Lucullus, it seems that Pompey likewise inherited his flaws, his arrogance and penchant for self-adulation.

The intention of this story is obvious: it was devised to further promote the image of Pompey's supposed concern and gentleness. Lucullus could not be protected from reprimands of his opponents due to the greedy nature of his depredations. In order to free Pompey from such charges, events are distorted by bringing on stage Tigranes the Younger—someone who summoned Pompey. An unprejudiced historian needs to correct this account to accept the fact that Tigranes [the Younger] appeared before Pompey either by his own will or by order of his father, to negotiate peace.

[503]

From the moment that Tigranes [the Great] refused to provide asylum for the king of Pontus, the Romans were obliged to reconcile with him. Pompey had no interest in rejecting the Armenian king's peace offer. Reconciliation could even be desirable for him if he planned to pursue Mithridates or to invade Iberia and Aghuania.

Therefore, he approved the terms proposed by Tigranes; the latter was recognized as the ruler of his own domains, and agreed to pay a fine.

It would be childish to give any significance to the theatrical scene of Tigranes' reception [at the camp of Pompey], during which it is said that the king may have removed his tiara and sword to lay them at the feet of the Roman general. Deliberate fabrication of this type was a common literary device intended to give the victor generosity, and to enhance the hero of the day. It is a cosmetic treatment.

There is no evidence that Tigranes, the founder of the great empire, was capable of such a useless gesture. Undoubtedly, it is difficult to refute it without evidence to the contrary. However, there are indications that the [pro-Roman] historians have allowed themselves to create stories.

It is known that the first characteristic of the Eastern monarch was his pride, and sense of dignity. Therefore, the kings considered themselves to be gods. Could Tigranes, who had called himself a god, after making so many conquests, do something so out of character? He who had restrained and overthrown so many kings knew better than anyone else that subjugation [of this kind] achieved nothing.

Should we recall the hostile position taken against Cleopatra [VII] by Tigranes' son, Artavasdes, to be convinced that Tigranes had brought up his son in a different way and in a different spirit than what historians attribute to him? We think it is necessary to distrust decorative and dramatic scenes of these types.

The origins of the dispute and incident between Tigranes the Younger and Pompey also are unclear. If the former had provided such service to Pompey, [504] why did he merit such cruel and ungrateful treatment? From what has been reported there is a lot of room for guessing that Tigranes' son was aspiring to his father's crown and hoping to attain it, even at the price of treason, with the aid of Pompey. Why should the Roman general refuse to give him what was owed him, even the crown of Tigranes? One of two possibilities presents itself: either Tigranes the Younger was not a traitor, and did not serve Pompey, or Pompey was treacherous in breaking his promise, as the king of the Parthians did, regardless of the existing agreement. It was in his best interest to deceive King Phraates. However, what motivated the Armenian prince or a possible ally to behave treacherously? [Pompey, in his anger] even had Tigranes the Younger paraded in chains in Rome during his triumph, presenting him, doubtlessly, as proof of his victory over King Tigranes. Tigranes the Younger had been taken to Rome along with his family, his wife and children.

From this murky story we might conclude that the two Tigranes were pursuing the same policy. There was no division between the father and son except, probably, over the policy to be adopted towards Rome. The son had undertaken to reconcile his father with Pompey, on the terms already presented. Then, for no apparent reason, despite the peace, the Roman general captured the young prince, motivated solely by one concern: to have him as an ornament in his triumphal procession, and to demonstrate his victory over Tigranes. It was then that the deceived prince expressed his displeasure. Prince Tigranes' displeasure, in our view, *followed* Pompey's behavior rather than caused the problem [(29)].

Tsopk and Gordyene, territories undoubtedly given to Tigranes the Younger, remained under his father's rule. The king of the Parthians claimed Gordyene and, when he tried to capture it by force, Pompey intervened, sending a military unit to expel him (1). It was over this same Gordyene that the Armenians and the Parthians contended,

(1) Plutarchi, Pompeius, 36.

Plutarch's [Pompey, 36](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[505] and because of which Pompey had sent three judges to mediate between them (1).

Pompey left one of his generals, Afranius, in Armenia to watch over things and, in the autumn of 66 B.C., he went in pursuit of Mithridates. Pompey camped close to where [the city of] Erevan is today. He chose the road from Dilijan, descending via the Aghstafa valley to the banks of the Kura River. In order to cross the river without difficulty, the Roman army had to deal with two people, the Aghuans, and the Ibers. The king of the Aghuans, Oroises, at first allowed Pompey to cross. However, as winter had suddenly come to the territory of the Aghuans, [the king] took the opportunity to cross the river and attack the Roman camps on December 17, 66 B.C., as they celebrated the feast of Saturnalia.

Pompey repulsed the attack, forgave the king for his treachery, and made peace with him. According to one version, Tigranes the Younger incited Oroises against the Romans. This is very likely because Aghuania, like Iberia, had been part of Tigranes [the Great]'s empire (but I do not fully understand how the captive prince was able to establish relations with the Aghuans). The number of Oroises' army is given as 40,000 men, which seems to be an exaggeration.

In the spring of 65 B.C., Pompey entered Iberia—more precisely Gogarene [Gugark]—and captured the fortresses of Harmozia and Sevsamora. King Artoces, who had fled across the Kura, retreated to the *Peloros* River, and tried to stop the enemy's advance, but was defeated and surrendered to the mercy of Pompey (2). *Nine thousand* Iberians were killed in battle, and *ten thousand* were taken prisoner.

(1) Plutarchi, Pompeius, 39.

Plutarch's [Pompey, 39](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) *Ibid.*, 34.

Plutarch's [Pompey, 34](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius];

Cassius Dio Cocceianus 36, 45; 37, 1-3. Ὀροΐζης (Appianus); Ὀροΐσης (Cassius Dio); Orodes (Eutropius); Horodes (Orosius). Florus incorrectly has Orozes, king of Colchis, and Horoles, king of the Aghuans. Ἀρτώκης, Artoches (Florus), Artaces (Orosius and Eutropius). Oroizes < hu - raučah, Ἀρχώκη < artawāka (he who speaks the truth), compare Σανδώκη < spantawāka (J. Markwart, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte von Eran*, Bd. I, Gottingen, 1896, S. 41)

[506]

Pompey advanced via Colchis. Mithridates escaped, fleeing north to the kingdom of Machares. Pompey reasoned that it would be extremely dangerous to go so far in pursuit of a fugitive enemy.

At that moment, Pompey learned that the Aghuans had rebelled a second time. As soon as he received this news, true or false, he turned back and attacked Aghuania, probably taking the route via Akhaltsikhe-Akhalkalak-Shulaver-Kura. After crossing the river, he traveled a long distance over parched and dry territory, probably in the district of Cambisene, or Kambejan in Armenian. Pompey had amassed 10,000 people to carry containers of water, as Lucullus had previously ordered that 30,000 Galatians follow him carrying wheat, to attack the enemy which was engaged in military preparations near the Abas [Alazani] River. Their large army, with 60,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry, was led by a brother of the [Aghuan] king, named Cosis. Pompey killed Cosis with his own hand, and Cosis' troops dispersed.

The Roman army had set out to conquer Vrkan/Hyrcania and [territories around] the Caspian Sea, but after a three days' march, it stopped due to the presence of large numbers of venomous reptiles. Pompey refused to go farther, and retreated to Lesser Armenia in the fall of 65 B.C.

The account of Pompey's campaign lacks veracity. It is difficult to examine and review due to the lack of indisputable information. But when the narrator goes so far as to tell a story about the arrival of Amazons to help the Aghuans, he is discrediting his whole story. The Aghuans were not able to muster 72,000 troops, or even 40,000, a number that is as mythical as Tigranes' 250,000 or 300,000 soldiers. The forces of the opponents are exaggerated in order to glorify Pompey's victories.

The second invasion of Aghuania was invented *ad hoc* [(30)], apparently to cover up Pompey's indecision in pursuing Mithridates. The information about an Aghuan uprising also is fabricated. The Aghuans, who had not been conquered by Pompey, had no need to rebel from him. Even if that had really occurred

(1) Plutarchi, Pompeius, 35-36;
Plutarch's [Pompey, 35-36](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[507], what interest would Pompey have in launching such an adventure in Aghuania again, far from his proposed campaign against Hyrcania? This is as unrealistic as his battle with the Amazons, and as his sudden retreat to Lesser Armenia—a distance that is much more than 1000 kilometers [621 miles]. Pompey who was careful enough taking his army from one end of the Caucasus to the other, would not have retreated over a much longer distance, because of a trivial rebellion (1).

It would have been quite natural if Pompey had reached Lesser Armenia, descending directly from Colchis, through Iberia, Aghuania, and Armenia, instead of making such a long detour. His presence near the Heptacomites, where three of his cohorts were destroyed, testifies to this assumption. This proves that in order to reach Lesser Armenia, Pompey went along the coast of the Black Sea. The place where he stopped, Aspis, corresponds to Ptolemy's Aspa, and what the Peutingeriana map calls Hispa, which is located between Daskusa and Melitene. If he had come to Aspis from Aghuank via Armenia, he would have had to ascend to the land of the Heptacomites and then reach his base in Aspis again, which is unbelievable [(31)].

Pompey, with the intention of resuming the war against Mithridates [Eupator] in Colchis, and being informed of the preparations, descended into Lesser Armenia, which served as a base for the kingdom of Pontus. [Pompey] began to destroy the last fortresses and treasuries of Mithridates, which had not yet been destroyed—despite the claims of Lucullus and Pompey. Talavran, Kaim, Sinoria, and Simforion, after fierce resistance, surrendered more due to hunger than to the sword of the enemy.

After the destruction of these fortresses, in the spring of 64 B.C., Pompey went to Amisus. Like Lucullus before him, Pompey hastened to distribute gifts and lands to the generals who surrounded him, and among which may be counted 12 (!) kings of the barbarians. It was at this time that Colchis was given to a certain Aristarchus, while Deiotarus, prince of Galatia, received Lesser Armenia, the land of the Chalybes, the Tibareni, along with the cities of Pharnacia and Trabizon.

(1) What Plutarch relates about this campaign is unknown to Dio, who mentions only the traitorous Aghuans (37, 3).
Plutarch's [Pompey, ?38, 3](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

[508]

Since Mithridates was still living, Pompey could not relax. In order to resolutely settle matters with him, Pompey set traps typical of Roman policy, and was able to arm Mithridates' son, Pharnaces, against the elderly fighter. Then he left for Syria. This country, which at that time had no legitimate kings, was declared a Roman province by Pompey. It is clear from this that Syria was still under Armenian rule in 64 B.C., when, apparently, it was freed from Tigranes' subjugation. During Pompey's stay in Syria, an embassy came from Mithridates to ask him for peace. Undoubtedly, Mithridates understood the danger posed by Pompey's intrigues. The latter replied that Mithridates had to come in person to submit to him. Mithridates agreed to send one of his sons or a relative (1). Pompey refused, confident that he could ensnare him. Indeed, when Pompey came to camp in front of the city of Petra after the subjugation of Judea, a messenger arriving from Pontus brought the news of Mithridates' death. The revolt of his son Pharnaces in 63 B.C. had prompted Mithridates to commit suicide.

This is a repetition of the sad story of Tigranes. The Roman general used the same tactic to separate the son from his father. Pharnaces was the most beloved son of Mithridates, just as Tigranes the Younger was to his father. Instead of openly admitting that he had seduced the young prince with a false commitment to separate him from his father, Pompey accused Pharnaces of dishonesty, greed for power, which might have led him to free himself from his father, and seize power.

Upon receiving the news of Mithridates' death, Pompey immediately took the road home and soon reached Rome to celebrate his triumph. During the grand ceremony, wooden placards were carried with the names of the conquered countries written on them: Pontus, Armenia,

(1) T. Reinach notes on this occasion that "Mithridates was not Tigranes." According to Reinach's strange reasoning, sending a son in his stead was a much bolder move than surrendering in person, T. Reinach, *op. cit.*, S. 401.

[509] Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Media, Colchis, Iberia, Albania [Aghuania], Syria, Cilicia, Mesopotamia, Phoenicia, Judea, and Arabia.

On the placards it could be read that Pompey [during his campaigns in the above countries] had conquered 1,000 fortresses and 900 cities. [As a result of his victories] public revenues had risen from 50 million to 85 million drachmas [(32)]. The public treasury had increased by twenty thousand talents, not counting what had been distributed to the soldiers, each receiving at least 1,500 *drachmas*.

Among the captives one could see Tigranes [the Great]'s son, his wife and daughters, Tigranes' wife, Zosime [(33)], one of the sisters of Mithridates, along with five children, the Iberian hostages, the Aghuanian hostages, the king of Commagene, and Aristobulus, king of the Jews (1).

It is not surprising that during this triumph one could hear that "after Lucullus, Tigranes and Mithridates availed nothing: the latter, already weak and disabled by his first struggles, did not once dare to show Pompey his forces outside their camp, but fled away to the Bosphorus, and there put an end to his life; as for Tigranes, he hastened to throw himself, while unrobed and unarmed, at the feet of Pompey, and taking the diadem off his head, laid it there upon the ground, flattering Pompey thus not with his own exploits, but with those for which Lucullus had celebrated a triumph" (2).

After all sorts of additional gossip and slanders against Tigranes, the narrator confesses—as unexpectedly as honestly—that Lucullus in his many battles had met in the undefeated person of Tigranes "a foe endowed with sublime bravery" (3) [(34)].

(1) Plutarchi, Pompeius, 45; Plutarch's [Pompey, 45](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(2) Plutarchi, Cimon et Lucullus, 3;
Plutarch's [Cimon and Lucullus, 3](#) [in English, at LacusCurtius].

(3) *Ibid.*

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Schneiderwirth Hermann. [Die Parther, nach griechische-römische Quelle](#), Heiligenstadt, 1874.

Notes by V. A. Boghosyan

Boghosyan's notes are at the end of the volume, on pp. 605-611.

[Notes for page 433]

[(1)] He means Quintus Curtius Rufus.

[(2)] The Armenian army also constituted part of the Persian military forces fighting against Alexander the Great, and was, incidentally, the third largest contingent after the Persians and the Medes. Armenians took an active part in the battles of Issus and Gaugamela. The issue of the role of the Armenian army during the military operations against Alexander the Great is described in M. Ohanyan's book *The Eastern Invasion of Alexander the Great and Armenia* (Yerevan, 2003).

[434]

[(3)] A large multilingual literature about Alexander of Macedon exists, from which we have selected a few which, in our opinion, more accurately explain the great general's true plans: S. A. Zhebelev, *Aleksandr Velikii* (Petrograd, 1922); S. I. Kovalev, *Aleksandr Makedonskii* (Leningrad, 1937); F. Shaxermair *Aleksandr Makedonskii* (Moscow, 1986), etc. Books devoted to questions of the Eastern policy of Alexander of Macedon have a particular interest: A. S. Shofman, *Vostochnaya politika Aleksandra Makedonskogo* (Kazan, 1976); B. G. Gafurov, D. I. Tsibukindis, *Aleksandr Makedonskii i Vostok* (Moscow, 1986), etc.

[436] note 2

[(4)] The new critical edition of Quintus Curtius Rufus accepts the reading "Ariarathe."

[441] note 1

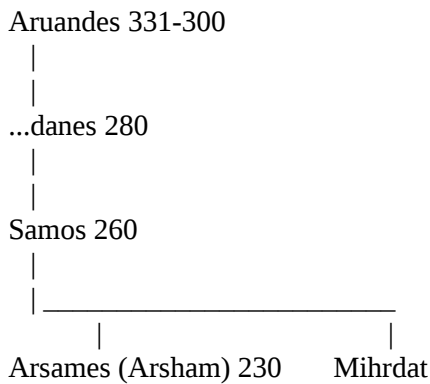
[(5)] This form of the Armenian king's name, Ardoates, has given rise to disputes. Especially disputed is whether he reigned in Greater Armenia or in Lesser Armenia (Armenia Minor/P'ok'r Hayk'). Many researchers (I. Droizen, J. Markwart/Marquardt, H. Manandyan, G. Sargsyan and others) believe that Ardoates is a distorted form of Orontes and, consequently, they believe that this was the satrap of Armenia, Orontes, who participated in the battle of Gaugamela and who, in 331-330, declared himself the king of Armenia.

Unfortunately, unknown to researchers until now, Adontz' excellent suggestion will strengthen the grounds for identifying the names Ardoates - Aroandes - Orontes - Ervand.

[Notes for page 442]

[(6)] The name of the son and successor of King Aroandes (= Orontes) is attested in the inscription of Antiochus I of Commagene. Unfortunately, the inscription has been damaged, and today one may read only the end of the name of Aroandes' successor, "... danes." Researchers have determined that the years of this king's reign fall within the first four decades of the 3rd century B.C. (see *Hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yun [History of the Armenian People]*, ed. of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, vol. 1, Yerevan, 1971, p. 511). Materials from the 2nd volume of *K'nnakan tesut'yun hay zhoghovrdi patmut'yan [Critical Survey of the History of the Armenian People]* [by H. Manandyan] found in the present volume 4 of Adontz' collected works show that the historian fully accepted the existence of the Orontid/Ervanduni dynasty in Armenia and even proposed a genealogical tree for it (see p. 444, also p. 605-606, notes 5-7).

[(7)] N. Adontz proposes the following the following genealogical tree for the Orontid dynasty, based on a combination of preserved testimonies:



Especially interesting is N. Adontz' opinion that Samos and Arsham belong to the Orontid dynasty, and were kings of Armenia generally, not only of Tsopk, which is the view accepted in Armenology.

[(8)] Even though the passage in question from Strabo relates to an Orontes (Ervand the Last) living at the end of the 3rd century B.C., Adontz proposes emending it, considering that it relates to the Orontes (Ervand III) who participated in the battle of Gaugamela.

[607]

[Notes for page 446]

[(9)] On the Seleucid Antiochus III (223-187) and the mutual relations with contemporary Armenian kingdoms, see in detail G. X. Sargsyan, "Անտիոքոս III Սելևկյանը և հայկական պետությունները [Antiochus III Seleucid and the Armenian States]," in the journal *Banber Erevani hamalsarani* 1(1969).

[447]

[(10)] Noteworthy among works on the Seleucid state is the general study by E. Bickerman, *Государство Селевкидов [The Seleucid State]* (Moscow, 1985). See also the sole monograph devoted to the mutual relations between Armenia and the state of the Seleucids (Zh. G. E'Ich'ibekyan, *Հայաստանը և Սելևկյանները [Armenia and the Seleucids]* Erevan, 1979). [Some works by [Elias Bickerman](#), at Internet Archive. See especially his article "[The Seleucid Period \[in Iran\]](#)".]

[452]

[(11)] Details about the Armenian-Seleucid war of 165 B.C. is provided by one of the noteworthy 4th-century Fathers of the Church, Hieronymus/Jerome, who took them from the 3rd-century Greek historian Porphyry. For an analysis of this information, see G. X. Sargsyan *Հելլենիստական դարաշրջանի Հայաստանը և Մովսես Խորենացին [Armenia in the Hellenistic Era and Movses Xorenats'i]* (Erevan, 1966).

[456]

[(12)] One gets the impression that N. Adontz had already written elsewhere on some of the figures mentioned here (Teritushm, Utiates, the satrap of Lesser Armenia Mithridates, etc.), from his remarks "We have expressed the view that..." "As we have had occasion to note..." However, where this occurred is not known since it is absent from the surviving material. Nonetheless, it is believed that Adontz had turned to the subject of Lesser Armenia in the 4th-2nd centuries in a separate study, unknown to us.

[(13)] The reference is to the Seleucid Demetrius I Soter (B.C. 162-150).

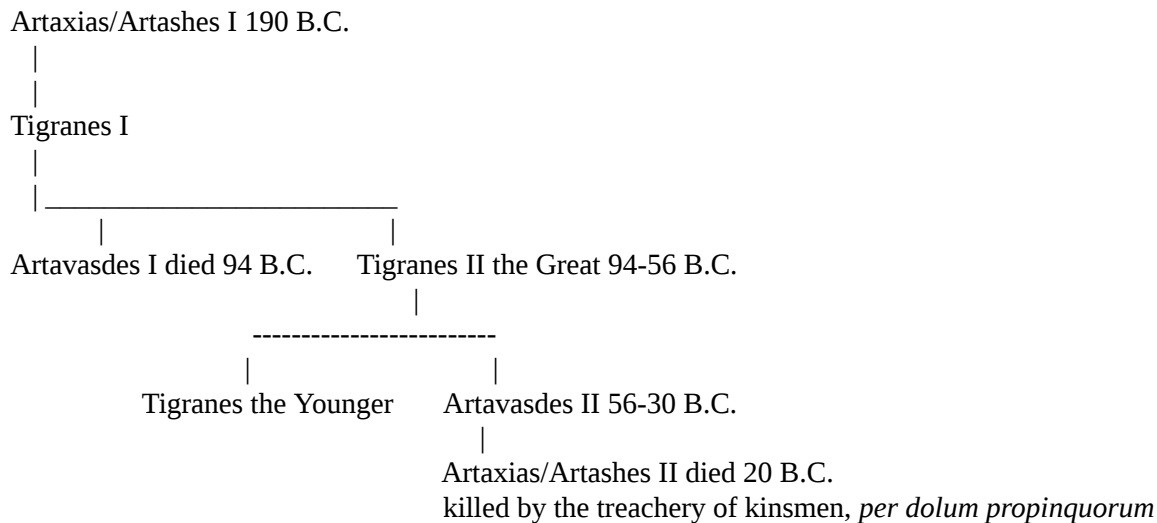
[Page 457] note 5

[(14)] Cicero, in his oration "In Defense of Publius Sestius," which he delivered in February of 56 B.C., clearly demonstrates that in this period Tigranes the Great was still the active monarch, "Tigranes who now rules in Armenia..."

[608]

[Notes for page 458]

[(15)] N. Adontz brought forth a similar king list for the Artaxiads—which is in opposition to the traditional list—for the first time already in 1908, in his Russian-language dissertation *Армения в эпоху Юстиняна* [*Armenia in the Period of Justinian*] (St. Petersburg, 1908), [стр. 427-428](#);
[Chapter XV. The Feudal Basis of the Naxarar System](#) [in English, at Internet Archive.] The chart is in the notes for the chapter, [pp. 500-502](#).



In recent years, variations on the Artaxiad genealogical chart have been advanced by:

G. X. Sargsyan, "Свидетельство позднеавилонской клинописной хроники об Армении времени Тиграна II," *Patma-banasirakan handes*, 1991 #2;

R'. L. Manaseryan, *Tigran Mets. Hayasdani payk'are" Hr'omi ev Partevstani dem* [Tigranes the Great. Armenia's Struggle against Rome and Parthia] (Erevan, 1987; 2007);

V. Matevosyan, "Artashes A-i ev ir hajordneru zhamanakagrut'yan masin [On the Chronology of Artaxias I and His Successors]," *Handes Amso'rya*, 1998, pp. 281-290;

H. P. Hakobyan *Tigran Mets* [Tigranes the Great] Erevan, 2005.

[459]

[(16)] This is an error. In this period the king of Cappadocia was Ariobarzanes I, *Philoromanus* (B.C. 95-62).

[(17)], p. 459 note 2. This citation, though it does not directly relate to the topic, is an additional indication that Adontz may have anticipated additional development at the completion of his work *K'nnakan patmut'yun*.

[(18)] Adontz does not give the reference to P'awstos, which is Book IV, chapter 11, and describes the six continuous years of fighting and wrecking which King Arshak II ordered *sparapet* Vasak Mamikonean to undertake against Kamirk'-Cappadocia. Perhaps he was searching for references to the interval between Tigranes II's [continued]

[609]

[Note for page 460] note 8

Cappadocian campaigns (in the years B.C. 93, 92, 74, 67-66) and the aforementioned raiding campaigns under Vasak Mamikonean in A.D. 350. In either case, the matter concerns the subjecting of Cappadocia to looting.

[472]

[(19)] The noted Greek rhetorician and philosopher, Metrodorus of Skepsis, nicknamed the "Roman-hater," was Tigran the Great's court historian. He wrote a work describing the *History of Tigranes*, which has not survived.

[(20)] *Casus belli*, Latin for "cause of war."

[473]

[(21)] In N. Adontz' manuscript, "chief priest."

[477]

[(22)] Regarding the location of Tigranocerta/Tigranakert, a respectable literature has arisen (C. Lehmann-Haupt, H. Kiepert, Y. Tashian, H. Astourian, H. Manandyan, G. Sargsyan, Ervand Kassuni, etc.). Despite this, the problem requires some supplemental research. See the best, most recent study based on primary and secondary sources and with additional bibliography, B. H. Harut'yunyan, "*Tigranakert mayrak'aghak'i teghadrut'yan harts'i shurj* [*On the Question of the Location of the Capital City Tigranakert*]," in the journal *Haykazean Armenological Review*, vol. 14 (1994), Beirut.

[478]

[(23)] Scholars believe that the text is referring to the tribes called *sakar'uak* ("black Scythians/Saka"), living on the banks of the Amu Darya ("Araxes") River [The usual Latin designation for this river is Oxus].

[488]

[(24)] A careful evaluation and comparison of primary sources—especially possible thanks to the work of the neutral historian Memnon of Heraclea, his *History of the Heraclids of Pontus*—makes it possible to ascertain the approximate troop strengths of the participants at the battle of Tigranocerta. The Armenian army had more than 80,000 men; the Romans, 45,000, of which, of the Romans there were 24,000 infantry and 1,340 cavalry; of the [Roman] allies (Galatians, Thracians, Macedonians, Bithynians), not less than 20,000 men [see P. Sapaghyan's article in *Haykazean Armenological Review*, vol. 4 (1973), pp. 97-102, [in Armenian] "Lucullus' Military Strength at the Battle of Tigranocerta (according to numismatic evidence)"; P. H. Hovhanisyan, "The Armenian Army in the Days of Tigranes the Great (the question of troop strength)," papers from the symposium "Armenian Army-15," (Erevan, 2007), pp. 26-27.

[610]

[495]

[(25)] Publius Claudius was the senior brother of Lucullus' emissary Appius Claudius, and had been a popular tribune in Rome in 58 B.C.

[497]

[(26)] *Dividi et imperia* is Latin for "divide and rule."

[499]

[(27)] The reference is to the Parthian king Phraates/Hrahat III.

[(28)] As we have already indicated (*ibid.*, pp. 599-600, note 39), Tigranes the Younger could not have been the grandson of Mithridates [VI] Eupator, because in 82 B.C. he was invading Seleucia as a military commander. Meanwhile, the marriage between Tigranes the Great and Cleopatra could not have occurred before 94 B.C., in which case their offspring, Tigranes the Younger, in 82 B.C. would have been 12 years old at most.

[504]

[(29)] Adontz' observations on the character and deeds of Tigranes the Younger are extremely original, though in need of additional facts. Mushegh Ishxan, who in 1940 was Adontz' student at the University of Brussels, writes in memoirs dedicated to his teacher that during one of their private conversations the professor "regarded Tigranes the Younger as head of the peace faction who, when he saw that Tigranes the Great was being pinched by Pompey on one side and the Parthians allied to him on the other side, went to the Romans to make peace" (Mushegh Ishxan, *Erek' mets' hayer [Three Great Armenians]* (Beirut, 1952), pp. 15-16). We note incidentally that it was in the same 1940 that Adontz wrote the sections of his *Critical History* of interest to us.

For the future fate of Tigranes the Younger, see the article by the Polish historian T. Lopashko in the journal *Banber Erevani hamalsarani [Bulletin of Erevan University]* #3(1980) "Об интересе римского народного трибуна к армянским делам [On the Interest of the Roman People's Tribune in Armenian Affairs]".

[506]

[(30)] *Ad hoc* means in Latin "for this purpose."

[507]

[(30)] Had H. Manandyan and St. Lisits'yan been aware of these interesting conclusions of Adontz regarding Pompey's routes in Pontus and the Caucasus, there is no doubt that their own studies on the routes taken during the campaigns would have been even more precise. See Manandyan's article in *Вестник древней истории [Bulletin of Ancient History]* #3-4 (1940) "Маршруты понтийского похода Помпея и путь отступления Митридата в Колхиду [Routes of the Pontic Campaign of Pompey and the Route of Mithridates' Retreat to Colchis]," and St. Lisits'yan's article in *Scholarly Works of Erevan State University*, vol. XXIII, Erevan, 1946 "Pompey's Route in the Transcaucasus" (in Armenian).

[611]

[509]

[(32)] Respectively, 50 million and 85 million *drachmas*.

[(33)] The view has been expressed that this section from Plutarch's manuscript has been corrupted and the text concerns not the wife of Tigranes the Great, but of Tigranes the Younger. See H. P. Hakobyan, *Tigran Mets [Tigranes the Great]* (Erevan, 2005), p. 193.

[(34)] The later imperial historian Vellius Paterculus has the same appraisal of Tigranes II, [calling him] "the most powerful king of the time," "the greatest of kings" (see Հայ ժողովրդի պատմության քրեստոմատիա [Chrestomathy of the History of the Armenian People], prepared by P. H. Hovhannisyan and A. E. Movsisyan (Erevan, 2007), volume 1, [pp. 362 ff.](#)

The presently published manuscript, which was written 70 years ago, unfortunately remained unknown to historians. If there had been an opportunity to publish it after it was written, many of the facts of the history of the Artaxiads/Artashesians would have been presented and interpreted in a different way today.

N. Adontz also wrote another article in 1940 on a similar theme, though the two studies are separate works, completely independent of each other, despite the obvious connection. See (in Armenian) [Միհրդատ Եվպատոր և Տիգրանը Մեծ](#). Also available in English: [Notes on Mithridates Eupator and Tigranes the Great](#). See also (in Armenian): [Կրասսոսն ընդդեմ պարթևների \(ըստ սկզբնաղբյուրների\)](#). Also available in English: [Crassus against the Parthians \(according to Primary Sources\)](#) [1940-1941]. Generally speaking, a careful reading of the texts leads to the impression that what is published here was an initial version which Adontz planned to refine and rearrange at some future date. For understandable reasons [Adontz' death in 1942] that did not take place.

Adontz's legacy also includes the drafts of several studies on the same theme, all written in French, all housed in Beirut in the *Papers of Nicholas Adontz Repository*, cabinet I, drawer B, folder 2: "The Campaigns of Lucullus and Pompey, Armenia according to Dio Cassius" (20 pages); "Tigranes II according to Mommsen and Reinach" (40 pages); "Testimonies about Tigranes the Great Culled from Ancient Sources" (60 pages).